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JAPAN AND ITS ART

By
MARCUS B HUISSH





Harry Seane 1887

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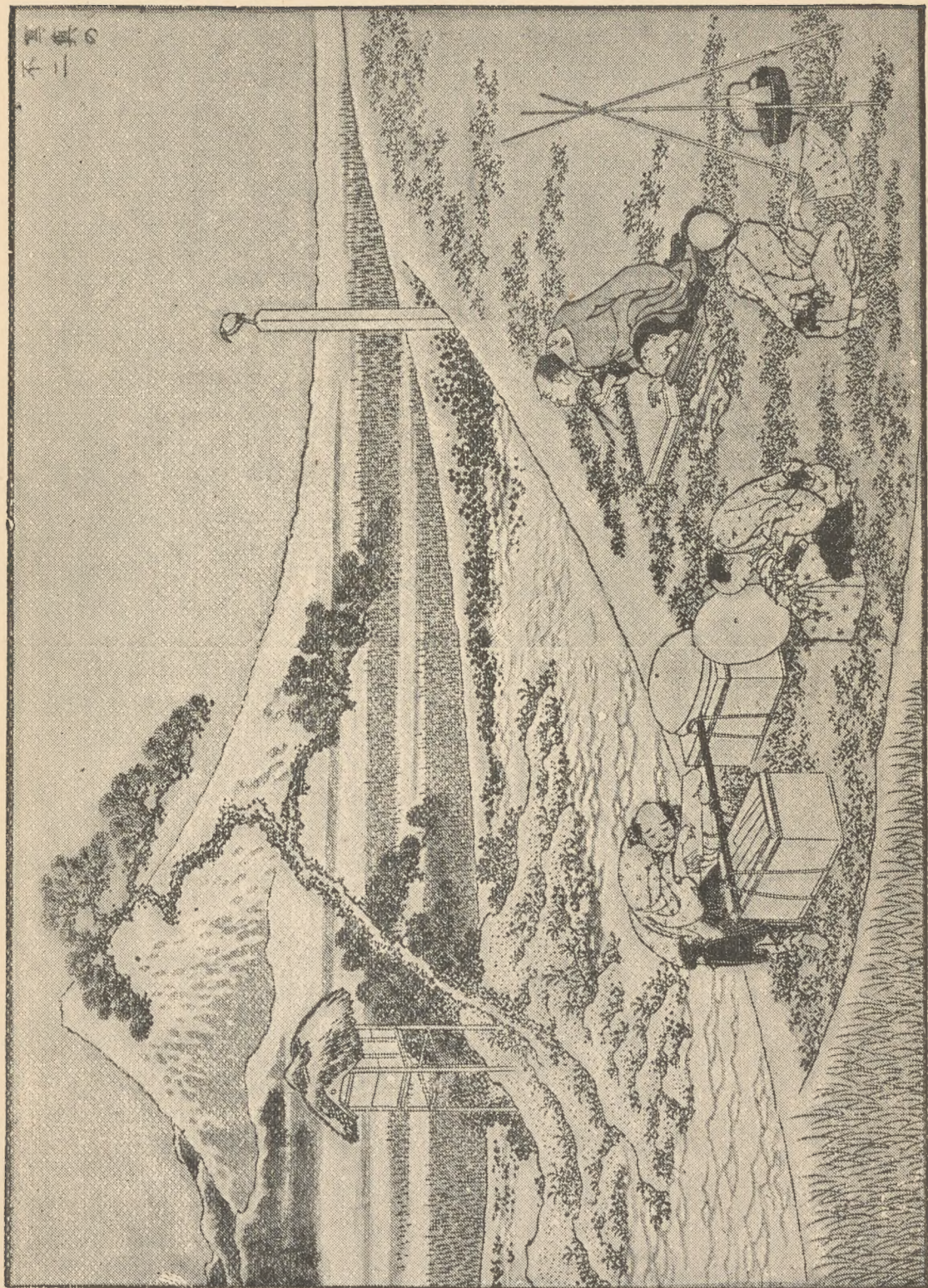
JAPAN AND ITS ART.

" Art is Art all over this quaint country ;

Art is almost air, for everybody breathes it."

Freer Gallery of Art *Social Departure*, p. 134.

Washington, D. C.

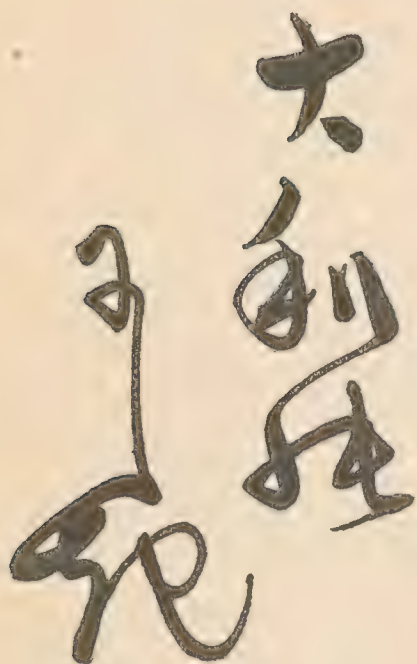


Hokusai sketching the Peerless Mountain. From the *Fugaku hiai'kei*. (By permission of Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.)

JAPAN

AND ITS

ART



SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND
ENLARGED

BY

MARCUS B. HUIISH, LL.B.

EDITOR OF "THE ART JOURNAL"

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"Mr. Huish writes with knowledge. His articles when complete will give much of that practical information which is now only to be got at by the study of very costly books."—*St. James's Gazette*.

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"Mr. Huish's notes are worth in themselves the price of the journal which he edits."—*Evening News*.

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN publishing the first edition of this Handbook I was considered to be somewhat venturesome in fixing it at a thousand copies. The public, however, has not only been so good as to exhaust that number, but to ask for more, a request which comes in the first place from Japan.

It is always a privilege to be able to publish a second edition, for it enables corrections to be made and omissions to be added. These, in a work written of a little-known land by a foreigner, must be numerous; that they were not more so in the first edition was due to the excellent sources from which most of the information was gathered. In view of the attacks which some more venturesome exponents of Japanese Art have had to withstand, caution and a testing of every authority is indeed necessary.

Whilst there is hardly a page of the first edition which reappears here in its entirety, I am glad to say that most of the new matter is in the form of addenda rather than corrigenda.

This edition contains two new chapters. Pictorial Art being, if not the most important of the Arts in Japan, at all events that from which the others have borrowed

most, certainly demanded to be dealt with. As regards Ceramics, Mr. C. Holme, who has studied the subject both here and at its source, has most kindly furnished me with a new chapter, in which he has dealt with it from the potter's, as well as the artist's, point of view.

This has necessitated an addition of 36 pages and 33 illustrations.

MARCUS B. HUISE.

October, 1892.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION.

THE reasons which induced the compilation of this Handbook, and the plan upon which it is arranged, are stated at length on page 2 of the Prologue.

It differs from the majority of works which deal with the Art of Japan in the following particulars:—

(a) It aims at giving an idea of the country, its history, its customs, religion, and inhabitants, as we see them portrayed in Art.

(b) It is an expression of the opinions, not only of all the best authorities (authors and collectors), whether European or American, upon the subject, but of a competent Japanese expert.

(c) No book of its size covers so much ground, or is so fully illustrated.

(d) It is issued at a cheaper price than any other English manual.

The bulk of the matter comprised in the volume has appeared in the *Art Journal*, but the whole has been revised and much added to.

I must here record my indebtedness to the following authors for the use which I have made of their published works: Mr. W. Anderson, Mr. Franks, Mr. Ernest Hart, Mons. Gonse,

Mr. W. Griffis, Mr. Audsley, and Herr Rein. I have always endeavoured to give my authority for any quotation.

Without the assistance of Mr. Gilbertson, who has set me right whenever I was in doubt, and who voluntarily imposed upon himself the toil of looking through my proof sheets, I could not have completed my task with any feeling of assurance.

I would also thank the many other collectors who placed their collections at my disposal for the purpose of illustration.

I have elsewhere referred to the advantage derived from my intercourse with Mr. Masayuké Kataoka, to whom my best thanks are due for the intelligence which he has brought to bear towards the unravelling of many of the endless entanglements which environ the study of his country's Art.

MARCUS B. HUIISH.

NEW UNIVERSITY CLUB, LONDON,
November, 1888.

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BUDDHISM.—Rhys Davids' "Buddhism."

CEREMONIES.—Titsingh, 1819.

CHINESE INFLUENCE.—Mayer's "Chinese Reader's Manual."

CRESTS.—Appert's "Ancien Japon."

FAIRY TALES.—"Japanese Fairy Tale Series"; Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan"; Griffis' "Fairy Tales."

FLORA.—Rein's "Japan," and "Industries of Japan"; Thunberg's "Flora Japonica"; Asa Gray's "On the Botany of Japan"; Conder's "The Flowers of Japan."

JAPAN ITSELF.—Murray's "Handbook"; Rein's "Japan," and "Industries of Japan"; Griffis' "Mikado's Empire"; Alcock's "Capital of the Tycoon"; Bird's "Unbeaten Tracks"; Netto's "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan"; Chamberlain's "Things Japanese."

LEGENDS.—Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan"; Mossman's "New Japan"; De Dalmas' "Les Japonais"; Froissinet's "Le Japon Contemporaine, 1857," and "Le Japon, 1864"; Oliphant's "Lord Elgin's Mission"; Metchnikoff's "L'Empire Japonais"; Loti's "Madame Chrysanthème"; Conn's "Life, Love, and Legend"; Griffis' "Fairy Tales."

POTTERY.—Bowes' Pottery; Franks' South Kensington Catalogue; Hart's Society of Art Lectures.

VOYAGES.—Embassies to the Emperors of Japan, Arnoldus Montanus, 1670; Kaempfer's Japon, 1732; Siebolds Nippon, 1832; Thunbeys, 1796; Golowonin's Captivity, 1827.



No. 1.—*The Air Castle.* From a *Kodzuka* dated 1804. (*Author's Collection.*)
(See p. 75.)

JAPAN AND ITS ART

“This nation is the delight of my soul.”—*St. Francis Xavier* (16th cent.).

PROLOGUE.



No. 2.—*A Lotus Flower.*

“A CLUSTER of isles on the farthest verge of the horizon, apparently inhabited by a race grotesque and savage.” Such was the “tolerably distinct” notion which in the twenty-second year of her present Majesty’s reign, her Envoy Plenipotentiary, Sir Rutherford Alcock, entertained of the Empire of Japan to which he was accredited, and on his way.*

It is almost needless to add that within a very short time our Envoy both thought and spoke differently of the people amongst whom he sojourned, and that since then he has become an apostle with a mission to spread the gospel of their claim to a place amongst the most cultivated nations of the earth.

The country has now been open to the view of the foreigner for five and thirty years, and in

* “Capital of the Tycoon.” Sir R. Alcock. Vol. I., p. 4.

that period has been permeated by civilisation in the shape of parliaments, legal and civil codes, railroads, posts and telegraphs, all upon European bases; it has been visited by thousands of foreigners; and it has disseminated its products throughout the length and breadth of the world. Yet, in spite of all this, what do the majority of us know about it?

During our youth Japan was treated as a *terra incognita*, about which little was required to be known, and even now should we wish to consult a geography upon the subject, we can learn surprisingly little from it. A manual recently issued by one of the first London publishers devotes but sixteen lines to the Empire of Japan, and contains almost as many blunders as there are lines.

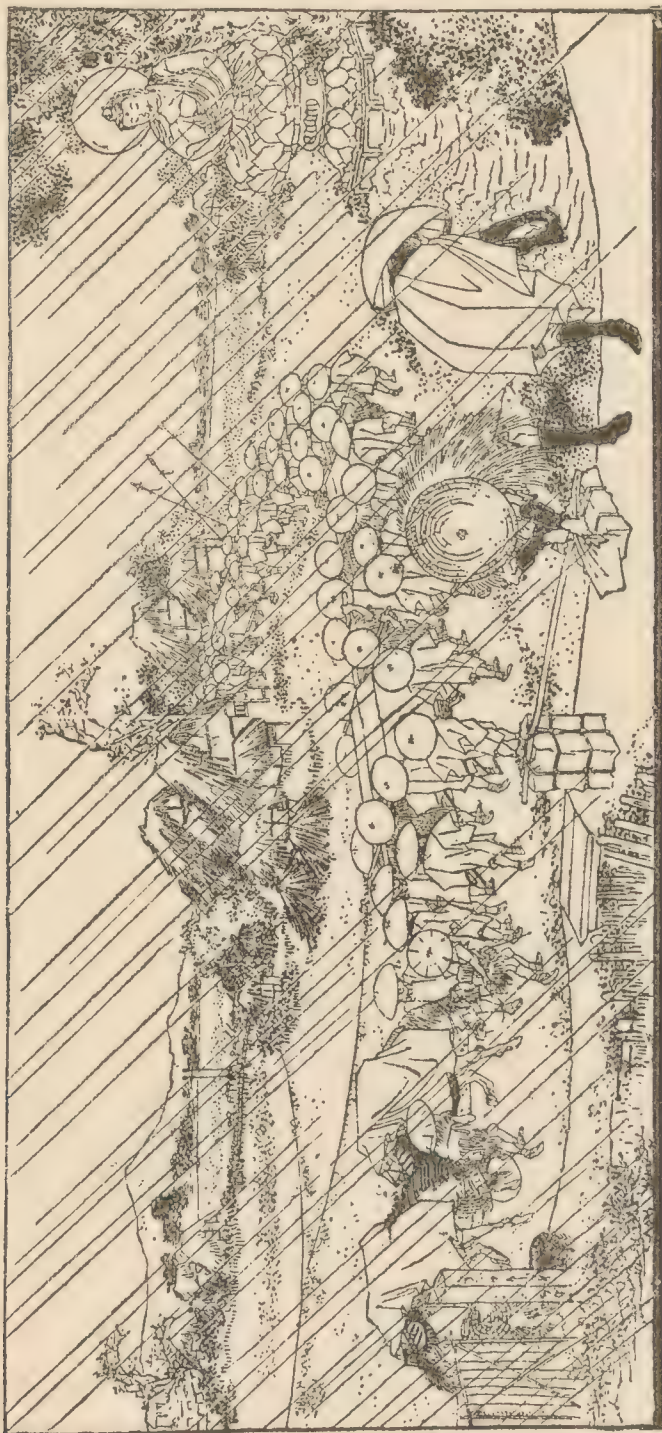
As regards Art we are in some departments considerably better off, though, unfortunately, most of the information is contained in very large and expensive tomes. But of many branches but very little is known either by natives or foreigners, and that little is in volumes written in characters which even a Japanese cannot always decipher with accuracy.

It was a lack of this getatable information which led me from the first days of my interesting myself in Japanese wares to jot down any notes which might be of service, and these form the bulk of this work, whose aim is to give in a concise and handy form the information which an ordinary individual requires, who, finding nowadays so many articles in use in his daily life redolent of Japanese influence, if not of actual Japanese manufacture, wishes to know something concerning their nature, manufacture, and ornamentation.

The plan upon which it has been arranged is to give an idea of (*a*) the physical aspect of the country; (*b*) its history; (*c*) its religion; (*d*) its people, their mode of living, their myths and legends; (*e*) its botany and zoology—all as illustrated in Art. Then, as a second part, to treat of its most popular arts, especially those which we term “industrial.”

The progress which has recently been made in reproductive processes now enables text-books upon Art to be illustrated

with some degree of satisfaction. Almost every writer who



No. 3.—A Sudden Shower. By Hokusai.

has hitherto touched upon the subject of Japanese Art has

had to confess that his illustrations were a failure, but, with the exception of those dealing with lacquer (which is impossible of proper reproduction), those in the present volume leave little to be desired. I must add, however, that the



No. 3A.—*Facsimile of 7th-Century Lacquer Box in the Nara Treasures (Hayashi Collection). See p. 150.*

subjects illustrated have been selected, not so much on account of their rarity as their adaptability to explain the letterpress; this must be my apology for so many having been taken from my own collection.



No. 4.—*Fuji-san and its Dragon. From a Kodzuka. (Author's Collection.)*

CHAPTER I.

THE PHYSICAL ASPECT OF JAPAN.

JAPAN is known under various names, the majority of which are not so fanciful as they appear at first sight. Chief amongst them is "The Empire of the Rising Sun," that ruler of the universe being also adopted as the national arms, wherein it is portrayed a bright scarlet. No traveller to Japan is at a loss to understand the assumption of this title, for he has probably seen, during his residence there, the blood-red orb rising out of the Eastern seas many a time and oft. Then there is Dai Nippon, or Nihon, a corruption (as is our "Japan") of the Chinese Jih-pên, "the place the sun comes from," an allusion to Japan's position as regards China; Kami-no-kuni,* or Country of the Gods; Nichi-iki, country of the sun; Ni-to, nest of the sun; Toyoakitsu (happy dragon-fly-shaped), from its supposed resemblance to the form of that insect; Kunshikoku, "nation of gentlemen"; and Yamato, "the great august country," the most ancient title, and one which is still used in poetry. Hondo is the name given in Japanese geographies to the large island which practically comprises the whole country.

Any one who has paid the slightest attention to the representations of Japanese landscape, whether on metal, lacquer, or other material, will be aware that mountains form an important feature in it. They are usually piled up one beyond another, with an entire contempt for the laws of perspective,

* Kami is the Japanese for all that is uppermost—a god, government, a noble, even the hair of the head.

and in many instances, notably in those which have a Chinese derivation, their forms are sufficiently repellent-looking to remind one of the backgrounds to the pictures of the Mantegnesque school. For most of this Japanese artists have abundant reason. Japan is essentially a mountainous country, its level ground not forming an eighth of its entire area; it is in fact nothing more than a ridge of volcanic rocks rising precipitously from an ocean of stupendous depth. Recent soundings have stayed at 4,600 fathoms, or over five miles, and were two of Japan's highest mountains placed one upon another beneath its waters, they would not reach its surface by more than a mile. Even the cliffs on the sea-shore, owing to continued corrosion from unnaturally swift currents, have usually a forbidding aspect; but in the mountains, owing to the decomposition which arises from rain, drought, and frost, the forms are usually rounded. Every remarkable peak is provided with a special god, in whose honour temples are built on the summit, and pilgrimages, which smack of picnics, are indulged in. Chief amongst them is one which meets with more than the usual amount of recognition from Japanese artists, namely, Fuji-san, or Fusi-yama, as it is termed by foreigners. There is hardly a work upon Japan which does not open with rapturous words of delight evoked at the first view of the "matchless mountain." To those who have crossed the enormous ocean which separates the continents of Asia and America, the first sight of land after weeks passed with nothing but an expanse of water to gaze upon, must be always pleasant; how much more so when it assumes, as in this case, a beautiful form. Griffis thus describes it: "Afar off, yet brought delusively near by the clear air, sits the queenly mountain in her robes of snow, already wearing the morning's crown of light, and her forehead gilded by the first ray of the yet unrisen sun; far out at sea, long before land is descried, and from a land area of thirteen provinces, the peerless cone is seen and loved." And thus writes De Fonblanque:—"If there is one sentiment universal amongst all Japanese, it is a deep and earnest reverence for their sacred mountain. It is their ideal of the beautiful in nature,

and they never tire of admiring, glorifying, and reproducing it. It is painted, embossed, carved, engraved, modelled in all their wares. The mass of the people regard it not only as the shrine of their dearest gods, but the certain panacea for their worst evils, from impending bankruptcy or cutaneous diseases, to unrequited love or ill-luck at play. It is annually visited by thousands and thousands of pilgrims."

This extinct volcano, rising to a height of 12,450 feet from the plain, almost isolated, of beautiful shape, usually snow-capped, and with clouds encircling it, lends an inexpressible solemnity to the view from whatever point it is seen. Ho-



No. 5.—*Narihira contemplating Fuji-san. From a Sword-Guard by Kon-kwan. (Gilbertson Collection.)*

kusai, one of Japan's great artists, published a book in which he depicted it under a hundred different aspects, and our frontispiece shows him at work upon one of them. Of the two renderings of it given here, one (No. 5) is taken from a sword-guard, by Iwamoto Konkwan, a celebrated maker of Yedo (Hamano school, latter half of eighteenth century), and shows the poet Narihira unable to take his eyes from a contemplation of its beauties.* I believe

* Narihira was a noble of the ninth century, renowned for his beauty and for his love for Komachi, an equally celebrated poetess (see p. 70). He is frequently depicted riding by her gate, and often playing the flute.

there is not in English annals an example of a love for nature at so remote an epoch. The other illustration (No. 4) is from a *kodzuka* (see p. 5). The object to the right of the mountain is meant to represent Takoaka-mi-no-kami, the dragon of rain, snow, and storms, emerging from the clouds. Iwanaga Himé is the goddess of this mountain. He who dreams of Fuji, two falcons and three egg-plants, will have a long, happy, and prosperous life. Fuji, snow, and the crane are the three perfections of whiteness. The illustration on our cover is from Hokusai's Fuji. It represents its manifestation or sudden creation, B.C. 285.* Next to Fusi-yama, Hiyei-san near Kyōto, Ibuki-yama near Lake Biwa, Kiri-shima, where the gods first set foot on earth, and Asama-yama near Nikko, oftenest find a place in landscape art.

It results from this mountainous character and a plenteous rainfall, that Japanese landscape does not lack for want of water, but the streams and rivers are small, narrow and swift currented owing to their rapid fall; torrential in the wet, mere brooks in the dry season. They are, however, utilised in every possible way, especially for irrigation. Japanese pictures bear witness to this, although the miniature lakes and waterfalls depicted therein are usually artificial.

Another remarkable feature in the conformation of the country is its extent of seaboard. Its coast is one continuous series of indentations, the sea being dotted with islands to the number of nearly four thousand. It has also more than one large Inland Sea. It is not therefore surprising to find that seascapes occupy a prominent place in Japanese Art. The dark colour which the artist often gives to his sea is not an exaggeration. The black current, or Japanese Gulf Stream (*Kuro-shiwo*), which laves the greater part of the kingdom, is remarkable for its conspicuously dark blue hue when in sunshine. The Japanese sailor being unable to distinguish between this colour and black has given to it the latter name. Besides the Inland Sea there is a large lake, named Omi, or Biwa-ko from its fancied resemblance to a guitar, about the

* See English translation, by F. V. Dickins, with Japanese original engravings.

size of the lake of Geneva. Being situated in the neighbourhood of Kyōto, and in the midst of lovely scenery, it is frequently delineated in the works of the school of artists which has for centuries had its headquarters in that city. The districts which surround it have also much interest for the Japanese, for they were the cradle of its early national history. We give illustrations of the two sides of an iron medicine box, whereon are depicted the eight* beautiful sights



No. 6.—*The Eight Beautiful Sights of Omi. From a Metal Inro by Kuzō.*
(Gilbertson Collection.)

of Omi; namely, The Autumn Moon from Ishi-yoma, Evening Snow on Hira-yama, The Blaze of Evening at Seta, The Evening Bell at Miidera, Boats sailing back from Yabas, A Bright Sky and a Breeze at Awadzu, Rain by Night at Kara-saki, and the Wild Geese alighting at Katada.

* A love for numbers has attracted the Japanese equally with the Chinese. We have the Three Imperial Insignia, the Four Heavenly Kings, the Five Festivals, the Six Views of Tamagawa, the Seven Herbs, the Six-and-thirty Poets. .

Waterfalls appear to have a great fascination for Japanese artists, who delight in portraying, especially upon lacquer, the curves of the water and the delicacy of the spray, an additional reason being that many of their legends are woven round them (see p. 64). The country abounds with them, and several are noted for their size, which rivals that of the principal European ones; as a rule they are not recognisable when limned by the Japanese artist, but the probability is that the majority are taken from the neighbourhood of Nikko, the most picturesque part of Japan, concerning which there is a rhyming proverb, "Nikko wo minai, uchi wa Kekkō to iu-na!" "He who has not seen Nikko must not talk of Kekkō," or must not assume good taste.

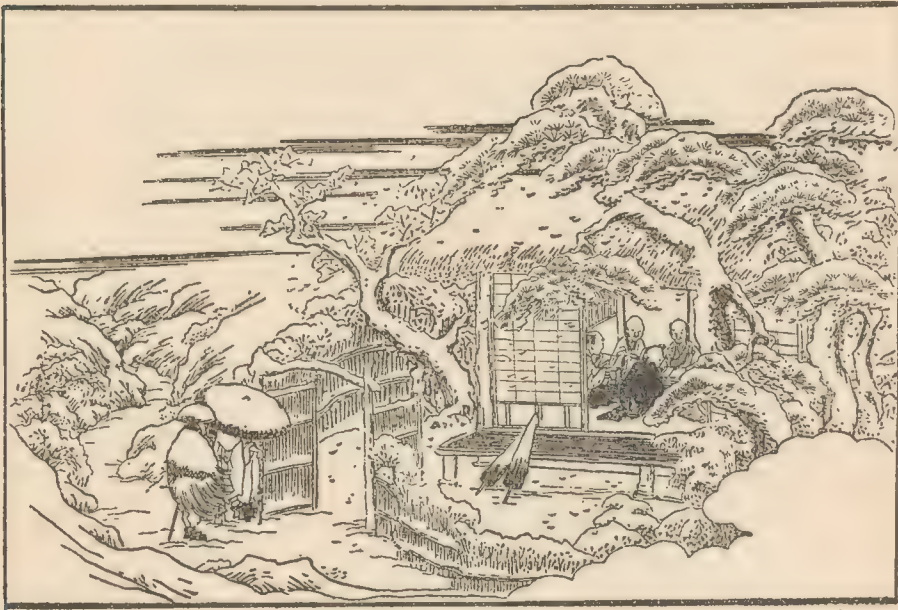
When the climate of a country is marked by considerable variations, a delineation of these will probably find a place in its Art; and this is the case with Japan. There are few things which occasion more surprise amongst people who look through any collection of Japanese pictures than the scenes which represent the natives either floundering in the snow, or clad almost in Adam's garb owing to the heat. It occurs to few foreigners that Japan has any such extremes of temperature a glance, however, at a chart of the world shows that the upper portion of the country lies within a temperature band which includes Iceland and Canada, and the lower within one which touches the upper portions of Africa. Its size is not sufficient to account for this; such an exceptional state of things is brought about by monsoons and an equatorial current. The clothing of the inhabitants evidences these variations, for whilst in summer hardly any clothing is worn amongst the lower orders by either sex, in the winter thick but light garments padded with cotton wool are universal. Winter must be a trying time to the ill-fed peasant; his condition varies but little even now from what it did a thousand years ago, when the following lines were written:—

"The hamlet bosomed mid the hills,
Aye lovely is. In winter time,
The solitude with musing fills
My mind, for now the rigorous clime

Hath banished every herb and tree
And every human face from me."

Translated by F. V. DICKINS.

Our illustration (No. 7) shows a wayside inn in winter. Trees, roof, even the umbrellas, are thickly coated with snow which accumulates to a great depth. Within will be seen four persons comforting themselves with the feeble heat given out by the *hibachi* or brazier. The engraving (No. 8) illustrates at once a winter scene and 'Filial Piety.' It is curious



No. 7.—*The Country in Winter.* After Hokusai.

to find such a subject on a weapon of war, but the Japanese never tire of inculcating this virtue in their children. The story in this case is of a boy, Moso, whose widowed mother fell ill, and longed for broth made of young bamboo shoots, such things not being procurable in winter. His devotion was such that the gods caused the shoots to grow suddenly to the size depicted in our illustration.*

There are few effects which a Japanese artist is fonder of depicting than his countrymen struggling under the annoy-

* See also p. 78.

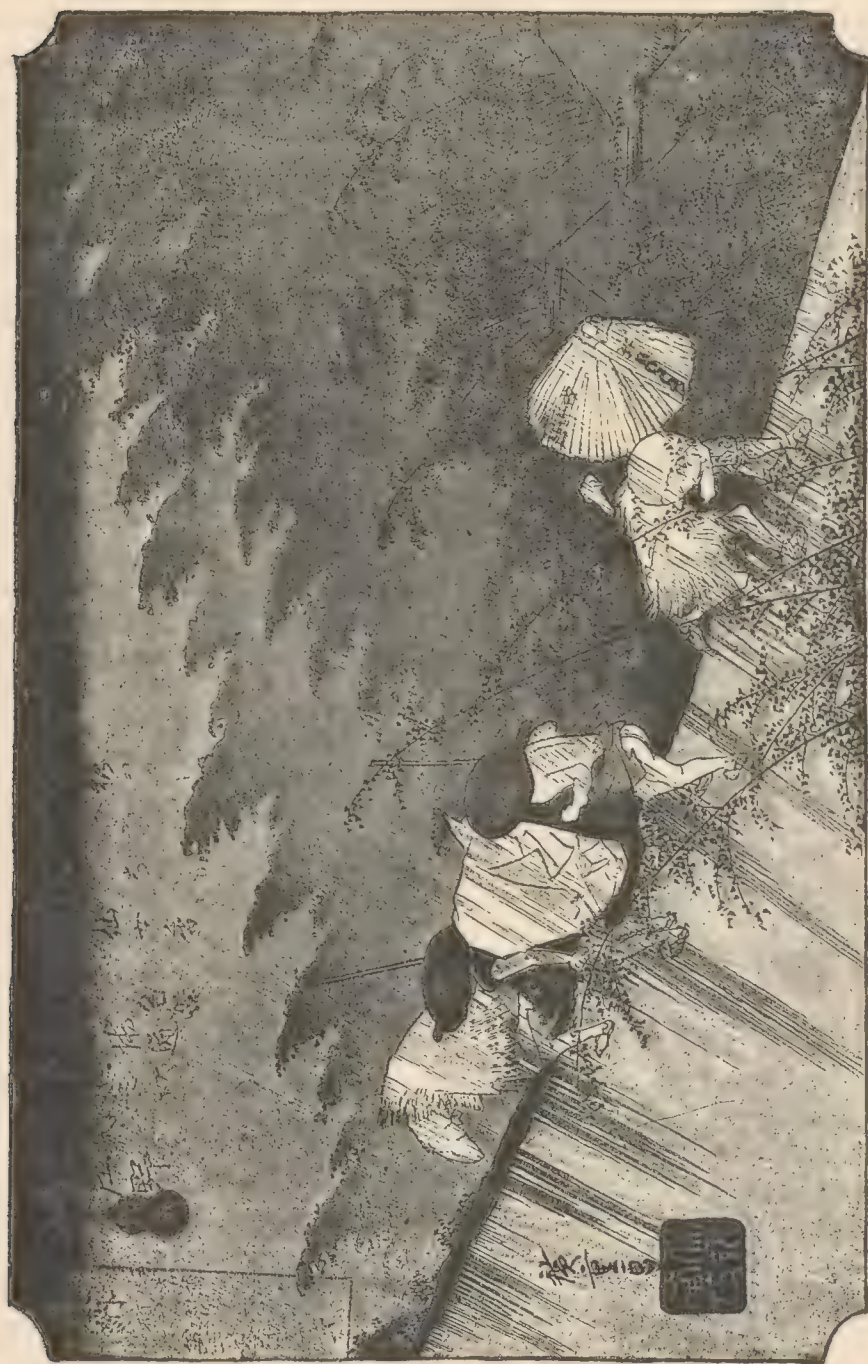
ances of rain, and bringing into requisition the umbrella, with which we are now so conversant: who has not witnessed the young lady hastening to raise her sunshade in a sudden shower? nay, even the warrior on horseback fumbling with his capacious gingham, or the peasants hurrying along under their huge straw hats, or the birds half hidden in the rain-storm? The sketch shown on page 3 shows a convoy over-



No. 8.—*Moso finding the Bamboo Shoots.* From a Sword-Guard in the Oldham Museum.

taken by a shower and covering up the baggage. An incident in the picture is noteworthy—the man using the pedestal of the statue of a wayside Buddha as a foot-rest, a sly cut of Hokusai's at the waning veneration for the deity. The reason for the frequent recurrence of such subjects lies in the fact that for several months in the year rain is very much in evidence in Japan; the spring and summer are almost tropical in their wetness; the rainfall averages 145 inches at Tōkyō,

double that of Western Europe, and it all falls in two or three



No. 9. — A Typhoon. After Hiroshige.

months, June and September being especially wet. Coming

as it does with a high temperature, it converts the country into a veritable vapour bath, inducing luxuriant vegetation, and making almost tropical flora to flourish (see chapter on Flora, *post*). Its effects upon man and beast are, how-



No. 10.—*A Sudden Squall. After Hokusai.*

ever, disastrous, resulting in extreme lassitude and early constitutional decay.

If there is one thing more than another in which Japanese artists excel, it is in the portrayal of wind, whether it be the soft

breeze just fluttering through the bamboo canes, or the furious typhoon raging through the trees and making everything quiver with its force. The inhabitants of this otherwise favoured country have indeed cause to hold in remembrance this mighty element, for early in the month of September the dreaded typhoon sweeps across their country, devastating and



No. 11.—*The God of the Winds.* (From "*L'Art Japonais.*")

carrying destruction as it goes. It is not wonderful that they ascribe a supernatural origin to it, or that the terrible god of the winds, Kazé-no-kami or Futen, and his passage in anger over the face of their country, find a frequent place in their Art. He is very frequently drawn as in our illustration (No. 11), with a sack full of wind over his shoulders; this he holds by the ends with both hands, letting some of the contents

emerge through one or both of them. In a humorous kake-mono I found him depicted as having broken his wind-bag and fallen into the sea, where he was being seized by a gigantic crab. Is he a shadow of the Greek God Aiolos who lent the winds in a sack to Odysseus?

Earthquakes naturally are hardly capable of delineation, but their frequency (during some years the earth being hardly ever quiet) has had a marked and sensible effect upon the



No. 12.—*Kaminari, the God of Thunder. From a Sword-Guard. (Author's Collection.)*

architecture of the country. The houses are all built with a view to safety during these convulsions. They are attached to no foundations, and rest on legs high enough to carry their floors above the torrential rains of summer. The material of which they are constructed is usually wood of sufficiently

light make to hurt no one upon whom it may fall. The Japanese ascribe earthquakes to a gigantic fish (see page 62), Namazu or Catfish. The Kanamé rock at Kashima rests on its head, to keep it quiet, which in its anger strikes the coast and thus makes the earth tremble. Others ascribe it to the *Jishin mushi* (earthquake insect), having a long scaly body, ten legs, spider's feet, and a dragon's head. The recurrence of earthquakes is so constant that in the newspapers of the day they are

only noticed in this fashion: "An earthquake was felt in the capital on the 9th instant, at 4h. 54m. 16s. P.M. The duration was 25 seconds, and the shock was a sharp one." After the dreadful shock of last year no less than 2,060 were noted in the two following months. Although the god of Thunder, Kami-nari, Sama (the thunder lord), or Raiden, is very frequently met with in Japanese Art, his visitations are neither frequent nor violent. He is usually depicted as in the illustration opposite, where he holds a drum-stick similar to a dumb-bell, with which he beats the drum seen behind it, and whence proceeds the thunder. Lightning rays often play round his shoulders and also strike the drum.

As regards the aspect of the country, it is everywhere picturesque. Owing to its volcanic origin the soil is very productive. It has been described as "a veritable garden of flowers," which is easy of belief when one thinks of the representations of them upon almost every object, whether of Art or otherwise, which emanates from the land. The flora are dealt with more particularly in a later chapter. I will merely here continue the quotation just begun—"All along the hedges, in the orchards, and about the villages, tufts of flowers and foliage of dazzling hue stand out against the dark tints of a background of pines, firs, cedars, cypresses, laurels, green oak, and bamboos." It may be imagined how delightful this scene must be when the autumn comes; when after the tropical rains the air is fresh and bracing, the sky is a cloudless blue, the landscape is coloured with the brightest tints, and the dust which prevailed earlier in the year has been washed away. The best season is from the middle of October to the end of December.

The country is everywhere intersected with fine roads; one, the Tō-kai-dō, or "Road of the Eastern Sea," leading from Kyōto to Tōkyō, was one of the glories of Japan, and with its stations has over and over again been delineated by the Japanese artists upon Inros and other things; but the railway and the telegraph posts are quickly altering the face of nature. Another, the Naka-sen-dō, or "Road of the Central Mountains," leads from Tōkyō to Kusatsu, near Kyōto. All

the great ways of the Empire start, and all the distances are measured, from the Nihon Bashi, or "Bridge of the Rising Sun," situated in the centre of Tōkyō, and a common object in pictures.

The land is thoroughly cultivated, but always on a small scale. Miss Bird says that the field of the sluggard has no existence in Japan, but that it is tilled with a pencil instead of a plough. Rice being the staple food and wealth of Japan, fields of it abound in the flats, and the plant is recognisable in pictures in its various stages of growth. It is first thickly



No. 13.—*Rice-cutting.* After Hokusai.

sown in soil which is very heavily manured, and is flooded every night to a depth of two or three inches. This dries during the day under a hot sun, giving off a loathsome smell. The seedlings, which grow in about fifty days to the height of three inches, are of a most verdant green. They are then pulled up and transplanted in small tufts. During the whole period the people are busily engaged in the slush, weeding and pulling up the mud in which it grows until it is ripe for reaping. It is then cut with a small sickle, and the sheaves are suspended across poles slung on forked sticks.

Japan, in a ballad of the eighth century, is called the "Land of Waving Rice-fields."

Rice is not only the principal edible,* but the national drink (saké) is distilled from it.

Had Japan been a country in which minerals were scarce, it is probable that much of her finest Art would not have been produced, for the hermit-like policy which has possessed the nation would have effectually prevented her obtaining them outside the limits of her territory. But she has fortunately been bounteously dealt with in this respect. Griffis states that gold and silver in workable quantities are found in many places. Copper is very abundant, and of the purest kind. Lead, tin, antimony, and manganese abound. The finest quality of iron can be obtained from magnetic ores. Gold for a long period had the same value as silver, hence the profusion with which it is used in articles of everyday use—a profusion which has led to many of the finest Art pieces being melted down for the sake of their inlays and overlays. In many of the small pieces of metal-work which adorn the swords, we find gold, silver, platina, copper, iron, steel, zinc, besides numerous alloys. An idea of the wealth of metal in the country may be obtained from the fact that the great Buddha idol of Nara, known as the "Dai-butsu," which is only one of many nearly as large in size, is made of bronze which is composed of gold 500, mercury 1,954, tin 16,827, copper 986,080 pounds weight, total about 480 tons, a worthy rival to the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar set up.

The population of Japan is now 40,700,000. The largest cities are Tōkyō 950,000, Osaka 360,000, Kyōto 260,000, Nagoya 130,000, and Kanazawa 110,000. In 1890 there were 3,825 Kwazoku, or persons of noble rank, and 1,993,637 Shizoku, answering to the old Samurai.

* Mr. Dickins (Intro. Murray's Japan) says that millet is the common food of the peasantry, with whom rice is a rare luxury. Its ears afford artists in metal an opportunity of showing some of their cleverest manifestations.

CHAPTER II.

THE HISTORY OF JAPAN.



No. 14.—*Mask of Uzumé.*
(*Gilbertson Collection.*)

It is surprising that the history of Japan with its fascinating surroundings has not been more laid hold of by Western writers, for never since pen was first put to paper has there been such a discovery as that which came to light when, in the fifties of this century, communication with Japan was first opened up. Reference has already been made to the ignorance which prevailed as to the condition of the peoples who inhabited this *terra incognita*, and to

the futile endeavour of our Envoy Extraordinary to find out anything about them, although he had for a long period been resident but three days' sail away. We now know that Japan was, to everybody's amazement, found to be endowed with a dynasty extending in unbroken line into centuries before our Christian era, and an Art of such an exceptionally high standard that every civilised nation at once rushed in to copy and benefit by it. This being so it is somewhat remarkable that in these days when the universal cry is "Who shall show us some new thing?" authoritative text-books upon Japanese

history may be numbered on one's fingers, and no two of them are agreed upon the majority of their facts.



No. 15.—*Amaterasu being enticed from the cave by the dancing of Uzume.*

The Japanese themselves are very proud of their history.

Few nations are so well informed concerning it. This arises from its forming one of the principal subjects for instruction in their schools, from their artists having for centuries past derived a great part of their subjects from it, and from their stage being occupied almost entirely with dramas founded upon it. That this is so is not surprising, for its chapters form a continuous record of episodes of heroism and chivalry of the most fascinating character.

Brevity must be my aim, but this is hardly possible when it is absolutely necessary to go back to the Creation, and the country's authentic history is as old as our own.

It seems highly probable that the Japanese are really descended through the Chinese from the early Turanian inhabitants of Babylonia, who were Accadians, or highland shepherds. Their astronomy, language, and habits have all been recognised as similar, and there are striking resemblances in their persons, especially the black hair, short and thicksetness, and slanting eye.

The Creation was, according to tradition, brought about in this wise. In the dim ages of the past there existed a Trinity who dwelt in space. Later came other deities (Kami), with separate existences, and after seven generations begotten from them, the Creation, which was confined to Japan, was decided on, and carried through in six stages, having some resemblance to those in the Jewish Pentateuch, the work being delegated to Izanagi and his sister, Izanami.* From these sprang certain terrestrial deities, amongst whom were Ama-térasu, the beautiful goddess of the sun, Tsukuyomi, the goddess of the moon, Ebisu, god of the sea, Susanō (Godzu Tennō), god of the tides, and Kagutsuchi, god of fire.† A story which finds frequent illustration in Japanese

* These and most other Japanese names vary in their spelling in every volume dealing with the subject.

† The last-named is, however, not worshipped, which is remarkable considering the frequency with which that element devastates the populous places. It is seldom that one takes up a Japanese newspaper without meeting with some such notice as this: "During the late fire at Onomaché Onogori, 1,095 houses and 222 godowns were destroyed."

Art is that of the quarrel between Ama-térasu and her brother, Susanō, and her consequent retirement to a cave, whence she was inveigled by the dancing of a goddess named Okamé or Uzumé. It is narrated at length in Griffis's "Mikado's Empire" and Reed's "Japan," and is one of the fairy stories recently published in an illustrated form as a child's book under the title of "Yamata-no-Orochi,"* from which we take our illustration (No. 15). Masks of the fair dancer are to be found in every curio shop. We give an illustration of one (page 20). The features upon these masks are always similar, and have been handed down for centuries—a narrow forehead adorned with imperial spots of sable, puffed-out cheeks, dimpled chin, and laughing countenance. One of them is usually to be seen in every Japanese house. In her full-length figures she usually carries in her hands a bundle of reeds and a dart bound round with herbs and little bells. Many ancient customs still exist which originated in this quarrel, notably the gohei, or branches adorned with strips of paper cut in notched fashion, and which are hung in all Shinto places of worship,† across the entrance to the *miya* or shrine; the drum upon which Uzumé danced; and the cocks which now inhabit the precincts of the temple, and which were then used to attract Ama-térasu's attention by crowing in concert. So too the sacred, burnished, circular mirror wherein the goddess beheld her likeness, and which is the origin of the round mirror of metal which



No. 16.—Kodzuka, showing Gohei. By Goto. (Author's Collection.)

* Kobunsha, Japanese Fairy Tale Series.

† These first took the form of offerings of hemp (*nusa*), a plant looked upon as one of the most precious productions of the soil, and has been presented as such to the gods. In modern times worthless paper has been substituted. Gohei are intended to attract the attention of the local deity to his abode.—Chamberlain's "Classical Poetry," p. 77.—At a great ceremony held in 1889, at the Great Shrine at Isé, the Emperor presented a golden gohei weighing 27lbs. avoirdupois.

Japanese women still use as their only looking-glass, and of the pastry in the form of disks used on New Year's Day. The two patches (*hohotsu*, or *bōbō*) on the forehead are still worn by ladies of rank to replace the shaven eyebrows, and the dancing of Uzumé before the cavern is imitated in a pantomimic dance practised in Japanese villages. Another frequent subject for illustration is Susanō rescuing Inadahimé, by killing the eight-headed dragon after he had induced him to partake of saké set out in eight jars. This exploit is depicted upon the bank notes of the country. A sword which he found in the tail of the dragon is one of the three sacred emblems in the imperial regalia. We shall have occasion to refer to it later on, in the chapter on Legends (page 68), as the herb queller (*Kusanagi*). Susanō was the father of Daikoku, one of the gods of good fortune, of whom more anon.

The sun goddess is still the object of much veneration. Thousands of pilgrimages are made yearly to her temples in the province of Isé, and to those of Uke-mochi-no Kami, or Toyouké-himé, the goddess of Plenteous Food, or of the Earth. The pilgrims are recognisable on their return by bundles of charms wrapped in oiled paper and suspended by a string from the neck.

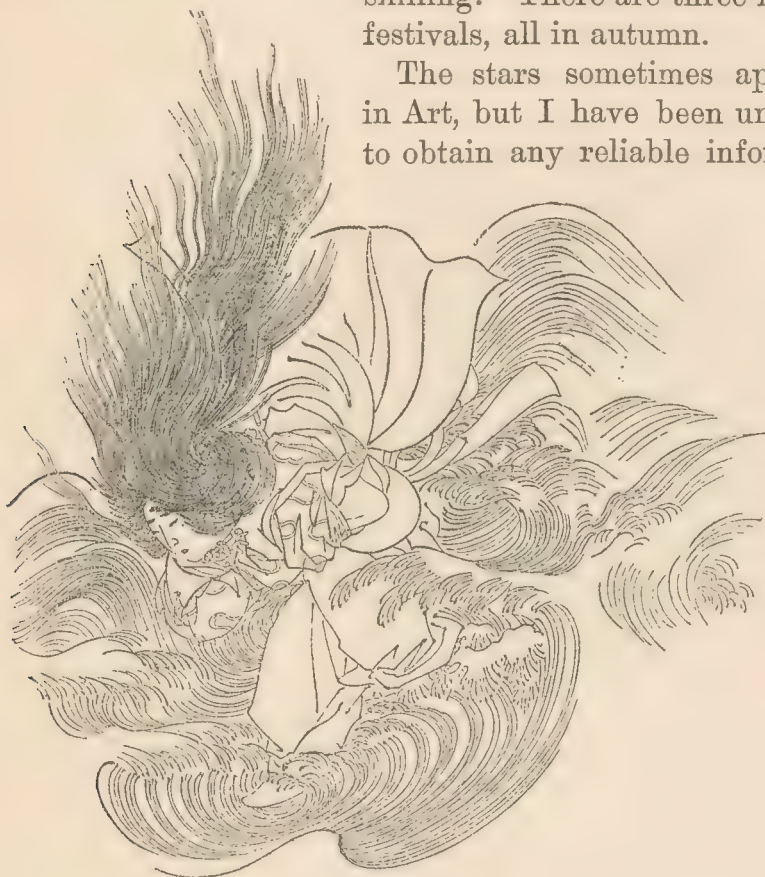
From the issue of these and other divinities the whole of Japan was overspread, the dynasty of the Mikado* being in direct descent from the goddess of the sun. The Japanese era dates from Jimmu, the earliest of the Mikados respecting whom there is any probable data. He came to the throne B.C. 660. A scene in his life also furnishes a subject for one of the national bank notes. To the Mikados the goddess entrusted the three emblems of imperial power, a sacred mirror, a sword, and a seal (*Shin-shi*). These are still in existence at Atsuta-no-miya, Isé, and Tokyō.

The moon finds frequent representation in Japanese Art,

* Mikado means "Sublime Gate." Tennō, King of Heaven, is the official title, and answers to our Majesty. The title "Mikado" is not used by educated people in Japan, and is distasteful to them when used by foreigners, who should employ the term "Emperor."

partly, no doubt, because it is so often sung of by poets. I refer to it in combination with other objects later on (see p. 134), but I would draw attention to the fact that artists in the land of which I speak are as much at variance as in our own as to its size. On the old sword-guards it is often no bigger than a pin's head, in later ones it is as large as a shilling. There are three moon festivals, all in autumn.

The stars sometimes appear in Art, but I have been unable to obtain any reliable informa-



No. 17.—*Oto-Tachibana leaping into the sea.*

tion as to the reason for their being connected by lines. The principal star legend is that which is connected with the Festival called Tanabata. It is that of a herdsman and a weaving girl, who dwell on either side of the Milky Way, and only meet on the seventh night of the seventh moon, the date of the festival. One star is in Aquila, the other in Vega.

I must now leave for a time the mythology of Japan, which, as Mr. Griffis remarks, "is like that of Greece, full of beauty, pathos, poetic fancy, charming story, and valorous exploit. Like that, it forms the soil of the national Art, whether expressed in bronze, porcelain, colours, poetry, song, picture, dance, pantomime, or romance. It is also the doctrinal basis of the ancient and indigenous religion."

Until the end of the third century of our era little is with certainty known of the history of Japan; the Mikado was, however, gradually assuming kingly rather than tribal sway, and below him feudalism was growing up.



No. 18.—*Hadésu (Kashiwa-déno Omi Hadésu) killing the tiger. From an Ivory Netsuké in the Gilbertson Collection.*

Amongst the personages of this period (which may still be called legendary) who figure in Art is Yamato-Daké, whose struggle with the giant Idzumo is an oft-told tale. It was his wife, the lovely Oto Tachibana Himé, who died by leaping into the sea to appease the sea-god and to

save her husband (see Illustration No. 17). Yamato putting out the flames with the sword found by Susanō in the dragon's tail is told of in Chapter VIII. A character which has been effigied again and again in Japanese Art is the Empress Jingō, whose wonderful exploits are told at length by Griffis ("Mikado's Empire," p. 75). In the collection of pictures, images, and dolls which, on the 5th of May in every year, teach the children the deeds of national heroes, and instil into them laudable examples, the Empress is placed among the male warriors. Another favourite subject with artists is a group

consisting of a snowy-bearded man, Také-no-uchi, her minister (he is recognisable by wearing long court robes over a suit of armour, bear-skin shoes, a tiger-skin scabbard, and a noble's high peaked cap), carrying in his arms the infant Ōjin, son of the Empress, on the deck of his war galley; the child is usually depicted receiving from Kai-Riu-O, the dragon king of the world under the sea, the tide jewels. Ōjin grew up to be a great warrior, and is even now worshipped as the patron of war. Numbers of shrines are dedicated to him under his name of Hachiman, or "eight banners." The tide jewels are used very frequently in ornamental art, and adorn the paper currency of the empire. Hachiman is usually depicted with a horrible scowling countenance, holding, with arms akimbo, a broad two-edged sword. Hadésu, ambassador to the Corea, A.D. 545, killing the tiger which had destroyed his daughter (Illustration No. 15), is also a frequent subject with artists (see Anderson's *British Museum Catalogue*, p. 391).

The interval between the third and twelfth centuries* was specially notable for the introduction of Chinese writing, the Arts, and the philosophies of Confucius and Buddha. Prior to our Norman Conquest civilisation had advanced to such an extent, that music, astronomy, philosophy, mathematics and medicine, all possessed fully organised colleges. Towards the close of this period the Mikado retired from public life owing to the rise of noble families, who usurped his power, obtained possession of all civil and military offices, and rendered him inaccessible to his people.

The first of these families to come to the front was that of Fujiwara, in the seventh century. It still holds the foremost place among the nobility of Japan, 95 out of the 155 noble families being of that name and descent.

It was not likely that the reins of power would be allowed to remain uncontested in the hands of any individual or clan, and the Sugawara, Taira,† and Minamoto families, in the

* Workers in metals and stuffs were introduced about the sixth century from Corea.

† The "Historic Romance of the Taira" is one of the most popular of the many works of fiction in Japan.

centuries to come, strove for and in succession secured the pride of place.

These struggles fill the pages of Japanese history for nearly five centuries. Many exploits during this period find exposi-



No. 19.—Benkei and Yoshitsuné fighting on Gōjō Bridge.

sition in Art: for instance, Kiyo-mori, a Taira, who long terrorised Japan, and subdued the Sugawaras and Minamotos, only to suffer defeat in turn at their hands; Yoshitomo, a Minamoto, his rival, who was treacherously murdered; the flight of Yoshitomo's beautiful concubine, Tokiwa; she is usually depicted toiling through the snow, with a baby at her breast, and two children, one carrying his father's sword, at her side. The baby was Yoshitsuné; he lived to be the "Bayard of Japan," and to earn the most famous name in the nation's history for his prowess. His elder brother, Yoritomo (but by another mother), also grew up to be a great general and ruler of all Japan. The adventures of the two occur over and over again in Art: for instance,



No. 20.—Taka-tsuna at the battle of Ujigawa. (See p. 69.)

Yoritomo secreting himself in a hollow tree after his defeat at Ishi-bashi-yama; Yoshitsuné's learning to fence from the Tengus; his fight with Benkei on Gōjō Bridge (see Illustration No. 19), as to which note the astonishment of Benkei at the agility of the youthful Yoshitsuné, who leaps so far into

the air above the bridge as to be almost invisible.* No collection can be looked over without coming across a dozen episodes in the life of the two last-named, who, after their combat, became inseparable friends.

After numerous defeats, the brothers Yoritomo and Yoshitsuné were victorious over Kiyomori, who saved himself by his death in 1181 from seeing his family dragged from power. Four years later, in a naval contest, the Tairas were utterly defeated, and every effort was made by sea and land to exterminate them.

We must dwell a little longer upon this period, for then it was that the dual government, which has puzzled so many writers on Japan, became an actuality. Yoritomo after his success founded a city at Kamakura, on the bay of Tōkyo, which he made his capital. Whilst leaving the government nominally in the hands of the Mikado at Kyōto, he actually assumed the reins of power at Kamakura, and established a military government, which lasted until five-and-twenty years ago. It was called *bakufu*, or curtain government, because of the curtain (*baku*) often to be met with in illustrations, which surrounded the commander's tent. He was the first Shōgun.† His fame is tarnished by his treatment of his brother Yoshitsuné, of whom he was jealous, and whom he is said to have put to death when only thirty years old.

The illustration at page 38 shows the present condition of what was once the enormous city of Kamakura. Nothing now remains to show where once a million people dwelt but a few temples surrounded by groves of magnificent trees.

A division of the people into civil and military classes about



No.21.—*Kojima*
writing on the
Cherry Tree.

* These and other illustrations are purposely taken from small objects, so that as many as possible may be given.

† This appointment, *Sei-i Tai Shōgun* (Barbarian-subjugating Great General), was the highest honour conferred by the Mikado. It was, until 1868, appropriated in succession by various families.

this period had a most unfortunate effect upon the future of the country; the former, which may be termed the agricultural element, and comprised the larger portion of the population, continued for centuries in the same condition of semi-civilisation; the latter became a clan which has occupied ever since the entire field of arms, learning, and intellect. Under their title of *Samurai* we shall have to deal with them at length when we come to the chapter on Society in Japan.

Griffis in his account of this period points to a proverb of Chinese origin, "There is no seed to a great man," as being exemplified over and over again in the history of Japan. It occurred in this instance. Yoritomo's descendants had no



No. 22.—*Nitta throwing his sword into the sea (?)*. From a Pouch Ornament. (Author's Collection.)

stamina, and soon became the puppets of the Hōjō family, who for a century and a half tyrannised over the country and sucked its life. They even banished the Mikado. Two episodes from this period illustrated here are favourites with artists, and are to be found on the national bank notes: Kojima, a faithful adherent of the Mikado Go-Daigo, writing on a cherry-tree which his captive lord was to pass, a stanza bidding him live in hope; the other, which I imagine to be Nitta Yoshisada, casting his sword into the sea as a prayer-offering to the gods, that the waves might recede and permit his army to cross, in order to engage the Hōjōs. The battle which

followed resulted in the overthrow of the usurper's power and the restoration of the Mikado, A.D. 1333.

Merit did not, however, meet with its reward, for Nitta and Kusunoki Masa-shigé—the latter one of the noblest names in Japanese history—found themselves supplanted by Ashikaga Taka-uji, a consummate villain, who embroiled all parties, gave Japan a “War of the Roses,” tilled the soil for feudalism, and abandoned the land for two centuries and a half to slaughter, ignorance, and paralysis of national progress.* He did not assume the Shōgunate himself, but he set up a rival Mikado, and in 1336 a conflict commenced between the northern and southern dynasties, which lasted for fifty-six years. He himself died in 1356, but his family ruled as Shōguns till 1573.

The precincts of the courts at Kyōto and Kamakura were naturally the quarters where artists first congregated, but the very causes which were at work to keep these as centres resulted in a spread of Art knowledge. A Daimyō, who, in order that he might be under observation, was compelled to spend six months of the year at court, naturally imitated in his distant home the fashion of the capital, and would probably take back in his train a worker in metal, or in lacquer, who could adorn for him his arms or his fortress. Such an artist, working with the sole idea of doing his best to please his lord, in want for nothing, having ample time at his disposal, and full of natural ability, was bound to produce results having originality and individuality; and this would be even more noticeable in the products of succeeding generations, when the skill had become hereditary, and the worker was the possessor of the secrets and methods of his ancestors. Although during a long period war was the rule and peace the exception, the arts made continuous and steady progress. Naturally, at a time when education was neglected and every one carried his life in his hand, it could only be here and there that this occurred. But warfare itself stimulated some professions—for instance, the manufacture and adornment of armour. When the owner's life depended upon the trust-

* Griffis's “Mikado's Empire,” p. 185.

worthiness of his blade, every effort was made to render it as perfect as possible; so we find the sword-makers attaining to a proficiency which has never been excelled by any other nation. The religious houses, save and except during the persecutions of Nobunaga, afforded a retreat where the arts could be followed in peace and quietness, though their inmates were only too ready to arm themselves and fight whenever occasion required. The service and adornments of the temple called for paintings on silk (*kakemono*), sculptures, bronzes, altar furniture, lacquer, and goldsmiths' work.

The notables of the Ashikaga family who find a place in Art were Yoshimitsu (1368—1393) and Yoshimasa (1449—1471), who introduced the political reunions, still kept up under the name of *Cha-no-yu* (see *post*, Chapter VIII.), as well as dancing and theatres. Both were artists themselves, and the latter encouraged painting and lacquer. His reign was perhaps the most brilliant in history from an Art standpoint.

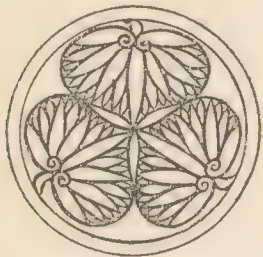
It was near the close of the Ashikaga rule, probably in 1542, that Japan was discovered by Europeans, Fernando Mendez Pinto, the Portuguese, being driven thither by storms, in a Chinese junk, landing in Kinshiu. His companion Zaimoto taught the Japanese to make gunpowder and fire-arms. The nation was not then antagonistic to the foreign element, which with its religion was welcomed, the earliest missionaries being Portuguese. The Dutch were the first to avail themselves of this opening for commerce, and for nearly two centuries they practically monopolised it, although the English established a factory in Japan in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

What may be termed the modern period came in with Ota Nobunaga, a Taira, whose military dictatorship bridged over the interval between the expiring power of the Ashikagas and the strong government of the Tokugawas. He and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, better known as Taikō-Sama (Taiko being the title of one who had filled the office of Kwanbaku, and "Sama" lord), paved the way for the constitutional rule of the Tokugawas.

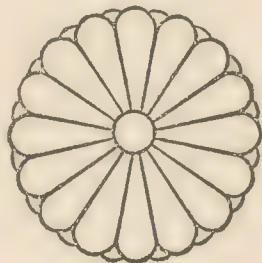
Nobunaga came to the front about 1542, taking the side of

Ashikaga Yoshiaki until he quarrelled with him in 1566, deposed him, and brought to an end the rule of his family, which had lasted over a span of two hundred and fifty years. He was fortunate in having generals of great capacity under him, by whose aid he obtained supremacy, not only over the greater portion of the empire, but over the Mikado himself.

Hidéyoshi, who followed Nobunaga, solidified the empire, encouraged military enterprise, and intellectual, commercial, and artistic activity. He especially fostered the Ceramic industry. "Raku" ware takes its name from the Chinese character, signifying "happiness" or "enjoyment," which was upon his seal, he having given Tanaka Chojiro, the potter, permission to use it.



No. 23.—*Badge of Tokugawa family.*



No. 24.—*Imperial Badge of Japan.*

We now arrive at one who stood foremost among men, who was a legislator as well as a warrior, who could win a victory and garner the fruits of it. This was Tokugawa Iyéyasū, the hero of Sékigahara, the most decisive battle in Japanese history, the creator of the perfected dual system of government and of feudalism, and the founder of Yedo.* After the death of Hidéyoshi, differences arising amongst the governors of the provinces as well as jealousy of himself, he encountered and defeated them and their army, 180,000 strong, in the battle just named. The result was the accession of his (the

* Griffis, "Mikado's Empire." The name of Yedo was changed to Tōkyō "Eastern capital," upon the abolition of the Shogunate, in 1868, when the Emperor (as he is now styled) made it his capital in place of Kyōto, which has also been renamed Sai-kyo, or "Western capital."

Tokugawa) family to power, the hereditary possession of the Shōgunate, and the isolation of Japan from all the world during a period of two hundred and sixty-eight years. Yedo became in effect the capital, and peace lasted for two centuries. Iyéyasū was made Shōgun in 1603. The title Tai-kun (Tycoon, or Great Prince) was assumed only by the last three Shōguns of the Tokugawas.

Wares made for, or under the patronage of, the Tokugawa family may be recognised by their bearing the family badge (Illustration No. 23), three awoi leaves (mallow or hollyhock),



No. 25.—Lacquer Box with Mikado's Crest.
From Gense's "*L'Art Japonais*."

their points meeting in the centre of a circle. Those made for the Emperor have the kirimon, three leaves and flowers of the *Paulownia imperialis* (Illustration No. 25). The family or court badge is distinguished by the flowers having five and three, instead of seven and five buds. The Imperial badge of Japan (Illustration No. 24) is a very conventional rendering of a sixteen petalled chry-

santhemum (Kiku). Latterly all of them are being perpetually forged for the European market. The national flag is, since 1859, a red ball (the rising sun), on a white ground.*

As a natural result of peace the arts in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries flourished to an extraordinary degree; not a single branch but advanced year by year, until shortly after the commencement of the present century, when a decad-

* Badges or crests (*mon*) were universally used by the nobles and gentry, the former having two or three, according to rank, and the latter one. These adorned not only the dress but everything which was decorated. For the principal ones see Appert's "*Ancien Japon*."

ence set in, as the result of excessive luxury. The policy of isolation from other nations, much as it injured the country, was little less than a blessing to its Art, which continued to be pure, individual, and unmechanical. We have little here to do with what brought about the ruin in a few months of a power which appeared likely to last for centuries. The rest of the world is the richer for the result of the events of 1868. The pauperising of the ancient families, by the confiscation of their lands to such an extent that princes and landed proprietors by thousands had to keep body and soul together by picking tea, making paper, or digging the mud of rice-fields once their own, was naturally followed by their much prized treasures flooding the markets and being scattered throughout the length and breadth of the world. Patriots are now discovering that their country no longer contains the finest specimens of its arts, and many are using their best endeavours to repurchase and carry them back again.



CHAPTER III.

THE RELIGION OF JAPAN.

“Japan is not a land where men need pray,
For 'tis itself divine.”

“*Manyefushifu*,” *Trans. by Chamberlain*, p. 88.



No. 25A.—*Christ bearing the Cross.*
From a Netsuké. (Behrens Collection).

THERE is no nation under the sun whose Art has not been materially influenced and assisted by its religion, and this has undoubtedly been the case with Japan, in spite of its people not being highly endowed with what has been termed “the religious faculty.”

It will not do to believe the travelled Japanese of the present day whose recollection only extends to a date posterior to the recent Revolution, when a blow was struck at all religious supremacy, and who considers it the correct thing in the Western world to sneer at faith and to ape the sceptic. It will not do, for everything points to the contrary, and shows that to religion Japan owes the greater portion of its Art.

The religions of Japan are so intricate and complex that it will be impossible for us to wander into a discussion of their mysteries. Herr Rein considers that no side of Japanese national life is so difficult for foreigners to appreciate, for although the religious instinct manifests itself in temples, idols, sacrifices, ceremonies, processions, prayer and preaching,

a scarcely intelligible indolence and ignorance prevent the attainment of much information on the subject. Only those who have the time and critical skill to search deeply, and receding from present ideas bury themselves in the old written traditions, can unearth the mysteries which lie beneath accumulations of centuries.

Shortly, these are as follows :—

The earliest worship was that of the heavenly bodies, wind, fire, thunder, and even the mountain streams and woods. Upon most of these I touched in my first chapter, and they need be dwelt upon no further here than to say that in one form or another their worship still exists. Following this came the deification of the illustrious dead and of ancestors, and this is still continued, for in almost every house memorial tablets of dead members of the family may be seen, who immediately on their decease become “Kami,” or beings to whom prayer may be offered.

For long ages it has been the custom of the Mikado in his spiritual capacity, and by virtue of his descent from the great sun-goddess, to exalt into Kami, patriots, heroes, or benefactors of the race. These are now said to number a million.

This really constitutes nearly the whole of the ancient religion. Until the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century it had no name, but it was shortly afterwards termed Shintō, or Kami-no-michi, *i.e.* the “Way” or “Doctrine of the Gods.” “Shin” being the Chinese, “Kami” the Japanese equivalent for a spirit, and “tō” and “no-michi” for doctrine.

Shintōism can hardly be said to have a definite creed or moral code. Dr. Dresser, in his “Japan,” considers that the whole faith may be summed up in the text from our Bible, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might,” and to this is due that thoroughness which is characteristic of all its Art and other workmanship in the past. Shintōism has influenced Art to a far less degree than its companion religion Buddhism, for it advocates simplicity of worship and life, and absence of decoration and adornment; it worships no images, and limits its sacred colours to red and white.

The Torii, or double T-shaped gateways, are the principal



No. 26.—*Shintō Temple at Kanakura.*

external signs marking the entrances to its temples. Pictures of these erections are to be found in almost every illustrated

book upon Japan. Two will be seen in the distance in the view of Kamakura (p. 38), and upon the left of the lowest compartment but one of the medicine box, Illustration No. 6 (p. 9). Mr. Satow considers that they were originally used for rests for the sacred cocks which ushered in the morn, but Mr. Aston derives the word not from *tori* a bird, and *iru* to perch, but from *toru* to pass through, and *iru* to dwell. Shintō Torii are usually of plain wood, and straight lined; Buddhist, when of wood, are painted or sheathed in copper, and the cross bar is curved; those at the temples of Inari Sama, the rice god, are red; they are sometimes of stone or bronze; recently a huge one has been made of cast iron! Apropos of this, frequent representations of the cock which abounds near Shintō temples are to be found in Japanese art. It is often depicted seated upon the drum which summons the faithful to service.* The interior of the temples usually only contain, (1) the metal mirror, emblem of divine splendour, probably of the sun; (2) gohei (imperial gifts), strips of paper, generally white but sometimes black, often gilt on the edges, cut out of one piece and attached to a wand; upon these the Kami or spirit rests;† (3) a ball of rock crystal, emblem of the purity of the Kami; (4) two vases of pottery or porcelain, holding boughs of the evergreen Sakaki. No lacquer or metal ornament is supposed to be allowed. At home, a small dais, Kami-dana, raised above and apart from the rest of the room, represents the family altar; upon this stands a wooden shrine like a temple, as well as a vase, in which each morning a sprig of evergreen and a little rice and cake are placed as offerings. Each evening a lighted lamp is also so disposed. It will thus be seen that this religion offers little encouragement to Art.

The obelisk-like structure to the right of the view of Kamakura is a lantern, in which the sacred fire burnt in ancient times. They are constantly seen in Japanese pictures, not being exclusively confined to Shintō temples (see *post*, p. 118.)

A few words must suffice for the Doctrines of Confucius, which were introduced into Japan in the third century, and

* See Illustration No. 89.

† See Illustration No. 16.

soon were tacked on to Shintōism. His philosophy, which is more a code of political ethics than of religious doctrine, is summed up by Rein thus: "His true follower is a good son, a loyal subject, and a faithful husband; amongst a hundred virtues, piety towards parents is the chief; amongst ten thousand sins adultery is the worst." Such a teaching naturally assisted ancestor worship and the feudal system.

Japan has been termed the "Land of Great Peace." Those who glanced through the civil history of the country, as briefly summarized in my second chapter, will hardly believe such a title to be in any way applicable. But as regards religious history it certainly holds good. The advent of a new form of religion into almost every land of whose history we are cognisant has invariably been marked by warfare, persecution, and enmities of the most bitter character. But in Japan (if we except the expulsion of Christianity when it attempted to gain a footing in the sixteenth century, and the persecution of the Buddhists under Nobunaga) for twelve hundred years two rival religions have continued side by side without any apparent hatred, jealousy, or rivalry.

Buddhism found its way to Japan in the seventh century, and made rapid progress. By the ninth century it had accommodated itself to the few tenets of Shintōism, and had by the aid of gorgeous ritual and splendid finery laid hold of and encouraged the religious sense which until then had lain dormant. To this religion is due, in a great measure, the nation's high state of civilisation and culture, and especially its great fondness and appreciation of nature. It bears a strong resemblance to Roman Catholicism, with its army of saints, its love of decoration, incense, vestments, processions, celibacy, fasting, and legends.

Undoubtedly the rise of the popular school of artists has had much to do with the decline of religion in Japan. The natural bent of the Japanese mind is toward the ludicrous, and "fear tempered with fun" describes the attitude of the popular mind towards religion. When, therefore, at the end of the eighteenth century a school of artists recruited from the ranks arose, it did not hesitate to present the gods in

extravagant and comical postures and costumes which were fatal to that reverence upon which the continuance of the whole structure depended. As in Greece, so it occurred in Japan.

Until the revolution of 1868 the mass of the people undoubtedly had confidence in their gods, but upon this event happening, the Buddhist religion was dethroned from the position of state which it had occupied under the Shōguns, its possessions were confiscated, and many of its finest treasures were distributed over the length and breadth of the world. The images of the gods, the vestments of their priests, the candlesticks, incense-burners, and other articles which adorned their temples, came into the market. Miss Bird tells that in her journey through the country she found countless Buddhas * lying prostrate and uncared for; but probably many of these had fallen into neglect prior to the Revolution, owing to the decay of the religion itself, for she gives a doleful account of the state of the people in these remote parts. All that remains to them of religion are a few superstitions, futurity is a blank about which they hardly trouble themselves, their standard of morality is very low, and their life is neither beautiful nor pure.

Shintōism, which had always been the creed of the Mikados, was at the Revolution made the national religion, and its priests were reinstated in the temples from which they had been ousted by the Buddhists. The result of the attempt to change the national faith has not, however, been successful, and has merely disparaged one religion without resuscitating another.

Christianity was promulgated with great success upon the first discovery of the country in the sixteenth century, but it was so thoroughly exterminated in the middle of the seventeenth, that examples of Art influenced by it are of the rarest occurrence. One of the few I have seen is a Netsuké (Illustration No. 25A), belonging to Mr. Behrens, which is evidently copied from an Ivory of European origin.

* These pass by the name "Buddha," though there never was any individual bearing that title. Buddha means "awake," "enlightened," and to be a "Buddha" is to have attained to the highest degree of saintship.—Chamberlain's "Classical Poetry."

A movement has lately been set on foot amongst an influential section of the educated Japanese to adopt Christianity as the state religion, not so much from belief in its tenets, but because of the secondary benefits its acceptance insures, and because it is the creed of the most highly civilised nations. The attitude of the serious portion of the nation towards Christianity is, at present, one of respectful hesitation, many



No. 27.—*Shaka. From a Wood Carving in the Author's Collection.*

of its tenets, such as the atonement through blood, being altogether contrary to the doctrines which have been inherited by those in the Buddhist faith. The missionaries allege that a considerable drawback to its progress is, that amongst a considerable section of the foreign community the Japanese see no attempt at any observance of the profession they are asked to belong to.

The carved figures of the Buddha, especially when they appear in London curio shops, have always a fascination for me. Unlike its Indian prototype, the Japanese idol is stamped with a certain nobility, and is often not only very well modelled, but ornamented with designs of considerable beauty. I have in my mind's eye one shop in particular, in which rows of neglected Buddhas used to be stowed on out-of-the-way shelves. The smoke-begrimed countenances of some witnessed to the years, now long since past, when they placidly surveyed through rising incense the crowds which daily came to pay them homage, and they seemed to cry out that below the dirt they retained all their pristine beauty. Others, more fortunate, were encased within natty shrines, and brought to mind recollections of homes far away bereft of their household gods.



No. 28.—*Kwan-non. From a Sword-Guard.*
(Gilbertson Collection.)

There are few persons outside the Buddhist faith who are able to pronounce with certainty as to the identity of these idols, for they can only be recognised by the peculiar position of the hands, fingers, and legs. Shaka, which is the Japanese conception of S'âkyamuui, the Indian Buddha, is usually seated upon a lotus thalamus, resting his left hand upon his

knee with the back downwards, and holding up his right hand with the palm forwards. He wears a jewel on his forehead, which often is of unusual brightness. That in the forehead of the Shaka figured in Illustration No. 27 often



No. 29.—*Kwan-non*, after *Hokusai*.

shines out with quite supernal effulgence. The same god, when in Nirvâna, lies on a raised bench. As a child he is borne upon an elephant, which presents a lotus flower to him with its trunk.

Amida, according to Anderson the most popular Buddha in

Japan, is supposed to reign over the Paradise of the West. He is a much later creation than Shaka, and is usually represented as one of a trinity composed of himself and his two sons. When alone, a halo surrounds both head and body, his hands usually rest on his knees, palms upwards, fingers bent, so that the last two joints of each are in contact with the corresponding parts of the opposite hand. His hair is curled, and its being so is the result of an episode in his life.

The Buddha is often depicted surrounded by a quantity of Bo-satsu, Bôdhisatvas, a numerous body of saints who have to pass through human existence once again before attaining to Buddhahip.

Kwan-non, who rules over Paradise with Amida, has long been a popular divinity in Japan, maybe because there are so few goddesses in the Pantheon. In shrines and paintings eight varieties of the seven Kwan-nons are often depicted, namely, Senshu, or the thousand-handed, he usually has forty, two of which on the lap always clasp the begging bowl. Bato, or the horse-headed, has four pairs of arms, and a figure of a horse's head on her brow. Inichi, or the eleven-faced; right hand open and extended downwards, left carries lotus or vase. Sho-kwanze-on, or the Holy; right hand elevated, with fore-finger and thumb touching, left carrying lotus. Ni-o-rin, or the omnipotent; four arms, one of the right supports the cheek, one of the left holds a lotus. Juntei, with many arms, one carrying a sword. Fukuken, eight-armed; first pair in attitude of prayer, second carry staff and lotus, third open, fourth carry willow and rope. Gorin, or willow, two-handed, generally carries a willow in hand.*

In Murray's Guide we meet with descriptions of temples dedicated to Kwan-non oftener than any other god or goddess. She is also represented holding a child in her arms, seated on a rock by the sea-shore, on a koi-fish, or accompanied by a dragon, as in our illustrations (Nos. 28 & 29). Sometimes appears in male form.

Ji-zō, the patron of travellers, the helper of all in trouble,

* I am indebted to the Rev. S. Coode Hore for these interesting particulars upon a shrine in my possession.

the protector of pregnant women and children, is naturally a popular deity. He is usually represented with a pilgrim's staff with metal rings (*Shaku-jō*) in one hand and a ball (wisdom) in the other. His stone image is found more frequently than that of any other object of worship.

Besides these there are to be found in Japanese Art frequent representations of a series of ugly and uninteresting divinities who become quite wearisome by their similarity, each seated, with shaven polls surrounded by a nimbus, and merely distinguishable from each other by their having as an accompaniment some appendage, such as a tiger, dragon, a futsujin or fly-brush, or a nio-i or sacred wand curved and surmounted by a trefoil. (See right-hand figure, Illustration 50). These personages are termed *Rakan* or *Arhats*, and are sixteen in number. If any one requires further information respecting them, he will find their portraits and names in Mr. Anderson's Catalogue, page 46.

Of not much greater interest are the *Rishis* or *Sennins*, a very numerous and frequently depicted set of personages, who can neither be properly called spirits, *genii*, or divinities. According to one authority they are persons who do not die, but who, when they reach old age, retire from the haunts of men for contemplation, and to practise austerity. According to another, they are beings who enjoy rest for a lengthened period after death, being for a time exempt from transmigration. Mr. Anderson traces the originals of the majority of those favoured by Japanese artists to a Chinese work which was reprinted in Japan in 1657. Those most commonly repeated are *Chōkwarō*, who conjures miniature horses out of a gourd; *Tekkai*, a beggar, who emits his spirit, also in miniature, out of his mouth; *Kanshōshi*, who floats on a hollow trunk; *Rōshi*, a little old man who rides an ox; *Gama Sennin*, the commonest of all, a beggar, accompanied by a toad, which usually sits on his head; *Ōshikiō*, rides a white crane; *Kanzan* and *Jitoku* (also one of the most usual), two boys laughing over a roll, the latter usually carrying a besom; *Rihaku*, gazing at a waterfall; and

Kinkō, reappearing to his disciples, rising, as he had foretold, from the river on the back of a winged carp or koi (Illustration 30). Two figures of demon-like appearance which are often portrayed are the Ni-ō, or Temple Guardians, one red, with an open mouth, representing the Yō or male principle of Chinese philosophy; the other green, and with compressed lips, representing the In or female principle. They are emblems of strength, and small painted Ni-ō are often pasted to door-steps to protect houses from burglars.

Actualities who resemble some of the foregoing are the mendicant priests, who are frequently introduced into popular prints. They may be recognised by carrying a pole covered with little bells, and a lacquered vessel for rice.

Sometimes they have on their backs a shrine about a yard high in which is an idol. Illustrations of these shrine cases supported on legs are often found on lacquer:

There still remain to be noted the gods of good fortune, and a number of supernatural beings, deified and mythical heroes, animals, and demons. Information concerning them will be found in the two succeeding chapters.



No. 30.—*Kinko, a Rishi. From a Sword-Guard.*
(Gilbertson Collection.)



No. 31.—*The Gods of Good Fortune after a night's revelling. From a Pouch Ornament. (Author's Collection.)*

CHAPTER IV.

THE GODS OF GOOD FORTUNE.

BESIDES the deities actually appertaining to Buddhism and Shintōism, there are a legion of other supernatural beings which have been grafted on to them. It is probable that the majority were found in the Pantheon of the country when Buddhism invaded it, and were taken up by the priests of that sect as an easy means of avoiding hostility, and at the same time of putting into tangible form hitherto intangible doctrines.

Mr. Anderson, in his Catalogue of Japanese paintings in the British Museum, than which there is no more useful book to the student of Japanese Art, gives the following classes of supernatural beings more or less connected with religion :—

(a) The seven Gods of Good Fortune. (b) The Arhats. (c) The Dragon, Tiger, etc. (d) The Rishis. (e) The Demons.

The divinities in the first of these classes are to be found everywhere throughout Japan; one or other of them is to be seen in every house, almost upon every article in daily use; in my collection of metal work certainly one hundred out of the one thousand pieces deal with them. Four of them come under the wing of Buddhism, namely, Bishamon, Benten, Daikoku, and Hotei, and to these a certain amount of reverence is paid; the other three, Fuku-roku-jiu, Juro,

and Ebisu, have come, like the Gods of Greece, to lose their respect, and to be treated only with an affectionate cordiality. As Mr. Anderson remarks, they owe their vitality rather to the artist than the priest, and have received nearly the whole of their extended popularity and influence from their lay supporters.

It has been suggested with some probability* that these gods came into existence to supply a want. The people desired many temporal blessings; they therefore said, "Let us make gods who shall dispense them, and let these gods impose no slavish worship, no self-denial, no punishment for want of reverence; they shall not be of forbidding, but of pleasant aspect; we will worship them at home, without formal ritual, so we shall have no troublesome visits to pay to the temple, no priests to bribe, no threats affecting our future state. There shall be no impropriety in asking for luck at cards, or good fortune in our amours." Accordingly each family sets up one or other of these deities in its living-room, and pays to them a simple but nowadays meaningless homage.

Around the deities have sprung up certain appendages, by which, more than by anything else, they are recognisable.

Fuku-roku-jiu, which translated means "wealth, prosperity, and longevity," is effigied as a little old man, clad in the dress of a sage. He is at once known by the sugar-loaf shape of his head, his vast brain having necessitated a capacious cranium. He usually carries a twisted, knotted stick, from which depends a manuscript roll; above him floats



No. 32.—*Juro. From a Netsuké.*
(Gilbertson Collection.)

* Audsley, "Keramic Art," page 91.

a crane, at his side is a deer, at his feet a tortoise, in his hand a sacred gem. The crane and the tortoise (see Chapter VI.) are emblematic of longevity; the sacred gem typifies wealth. A figure very similar to Fuku is to be found in Chinese Art. Two were in the Magniac Collection.

Jurō, or Jurō-jin, the god of longevity, is hardly to be distinguished from Fuku-roku-jiu, and is probably only a variation of his comrade. He, too, as in Mr. Gilbertson's old

Netsuké (Illustration No. 32), usually carries a staff to which a roll is tied by a string, and also a fan. His head attains height not less surprising than his companion's, but it is usually covered with a transparent cap. He is also generally of graver mien than Fuku. The bamboo, plum, and pine, emblems of longevity,



No. 33.—Ebisu. From a Sword-Guard. (Gilbertson Collection.)

will be found as a background to his figure.

Ebisu was the son of Izanagi and Izanami (see Chapter II., page 22), but his royal parentage has not given him a higher station than his fellows. He is a cripple, but that does not have any effect upon his jocular, for he is termed "the smiling one." He is the god of daily food, and particularly of that very considerable portion of it which in Japan is derived from the sea. He is generally represented with rod and basket

struggling with a *tai* or bream. See the sword-guard (Illustration No. 33), and note how cleverly the bamboo rod frames the subject.

Hotei has been to a certain extent adopted by the Buddhists. Mr. Anderson considers him the least dignified of the party, as he is the greatest favourite. No one who sees the representations of him can doubt this. He is always very fat (fatness is admired in Japan), half-clothed, enveloped in a big bag, after which he is named (*ho-tei*, cloth bag), and accompanied by children, of whom he is supposed to be very fond. His bag may also contain the "Precious Things," but it is used indiscriminately for sleeping in, catching children in, and other purposes.

A Treasure Ship comes into harbour every New Year's Eve, laden with the gods who, like Father Santa Claus, bring all sorts of good things, which in Japan are per-



No. 34.—*The Treasure Ship.* From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)



No. 35.—*Daikoku.* From a Sword-Guard. (Author's Collection.)

sonated by the Takara-mono, or "Precious Things." These comprise the inexhaustible purse, the precious jewel, the

hammer, the hat of invisibility, the lucky rain coat, which becomes wings to the wearer, the sacred key to the godown, the weight, the clove, in the shape of a powder-horn, and the "shippo," or seven jewels, namely, gold, silver, red coral, agate, emerald, crystal, and pearl (see Illustration No. 34). By means of the shippo the artist symbolises in brief many a long story. The tribute paid by any subjugated personage in fairy stories is always shippo.



No. 26.—*Daikoku. From a Sword-Guard.*
(*Author's Collection.*)

Daikoku is a Japanese, but has also been adopted by the Buddhists. He is perhaps the most important of the Gods of Good Fortune, for is he not the one who brings prosperity in his train? In the two representations which we give of him most of his attributes will be seen. In one he is holding the miner's mallet used for the acquisition

of mineral wealth, and the bag which contains the Takaramono. Beneath his feet are rice bales, indicative of wealth arising from the products of the soil. His broad cap, too, painted black, has its meaning; his long-lobed ears, distinctive of divine personages, are a mark of beauty. On the above sword-guard he is represented as a merchant looking through a satisfactory balance sheet; the lid of the box, which contains the ledger, bears the title, "This is the

prosperous shop." He often is accompanied by a rat, which makes inroads into his rice bales to show that when riches are gained they must still be watched (see Chapter X.).

Bishamon Ten can trace his derivation to a Hindoo deity. In Japan he is the god of prosperity and renown, and his true followers will quickly obtain fortune, wisdom, long life, and pleasures. Many authors consider him to be the god of war, but Mr. Anderson believes that this arises from his fierce looks and martial guise, and that he is not especially associated with military glory. Bishamon was incorporated into the Buddhist Pantheon very shortly after its introduction into Japan, but latterly the artists have been taking away his reputation even to the extent of exhibiting him making love to Benten over his cups. He is usually habited in a Chinese costume, and holds a halbert in one hand and a pagoda in the other.



No. 37.—*Benten.* (From an *Okimono* in the *Gilbertson Collection.*)

Benten (or Ben-zai-ten) is supposed to be a Japanese version of a Brahmanic goddess, but opinions differ as to which. In Buddhistic Art she is represented under the most varied forms, even as a many-armed goddess, often seated on a rock with a dragon beneath her, and sometimes surrounded by her sons, who are to be recognised by various symbols (see Anderson's *Brit. Mus. Cat.*, p. 43); but in secular painting, with which we have principally to do, she usually wears a small tiara and a flowing robe, and carries a stringed instrument (biwa). On her crown she has a white snake,

which is a woman condemned to pass one thousand years in that guise for her sins.

When depicted in company with her companion gods, it usually is as the musician of the party.

In the pouch ornament (Illustration p. 48) five of the seven gods, Daikoku, Fuku-roku-jiu, Hotei, Bishamon, and Jurō, are to be seen making night hideous with their shoutings as they return home in a very jovial condition.





No. 38.—*The Spiritual Dragon. From a Kodzuka. (Author's Collection.)*

CHAPTER V.

MYTHICAL BEINGS AND ANIMALS.

IN previous chapters we have had principally to do with gods of good intent, who are happily more prominent in Japanese Art than evilly disposed ones. The Japanese religion differs from the majority of others, in having but a small portion of its Pantheon set apart for this latter category, and we seldom find in the older and higher walks of Art an inclination to dwell upon the horrors of the Inferno. The Japanese is too good-humoured and self-satisfied to be influenced or terrified by the pains of the hereafter. With him "sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," and he meets even the demons with a smile and a joke. In the British Museum collection there is a set of kakemonos representing the various grades of Hell. These belong to the Buddhist school, and are said to be copies of originals dating from the ninth century. But Europeans fortunately are usually spared this phase of Japanese Art. The collection of over two thousand objects exhibited at The Fine Art Society's in 1888 only contained three representations of Yemma, or Enma Ō, the Regent of Hades, and none of any



No. 39.—*Kiyo-himé with the Monk An-chin From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)*

portion of his domains.* The exhibition included, however, many a score illustrations of the *Oni*, or demons, which, if we may judge from Art, are more of an amusement than a nuisance to those around whom they hover.



No. 40.—*Exorcising on Oni.* After Hokusai.

More usually these Oni are merely mischievous imps which

* His attributes are a cap like a judge's *béret*, and a huge mace. Before him sit two myrmidons, one of whom has a pen to write down the sins of human beings, whilst the other reads out the list of offences from

haunt the precincts of houses, and require on certain festivals to be warned off or exorcised. On New Year's Day special attention is paid to them, and they are pelted off the premises with showers of beans as shown in Illustration No. 40.* Onis are a frequent subject for the Japanese artist, especially in Netsukés; so, too, is Shō-ki (Ch: Chung Kwei), a personage who has been handed on by the Chinese. He was engaged by an emperor of the Ming dynasty, in the eighth century, to quell the demons which infested the imperial palace, and many are the variations, for the most part comical, in which he is represented in every branch of Art. The "demon-queller" usually seems to be having a rough time, and a very trying one to his temper.

Somewhat akin to the Oni are the Tengu, or wood sprites, which are of two kinds; ordinary with human face and form, but with wings and a very long nose, and avial, with a bird-like head and claws. They are apparently harmless. Yoshi-tsuné learning to fence from the Tengu king, and young Kin-toki catching Tengu, are frequent subjects.



No. 41.—*Shō-ki Sharpening his Sword.*

Specimens of both kinds of Tengu are to be seen in the reproduction of Hokusai's print (Illustration No. 42), where a great Japanese celebrity, by name Sagami Niudo Taira no

a roll. He is evidently derived from the Brahmin god Yama. The souls of the dead are judged by him and sent back to this world either in a higher or lower sphere according to deserts. "He who has toiled as a slave may re-appear as a prince; he who has ruled as a king may wander in rags."

* We also see here the straw rope (*shimé*) which is hung over the house door at the New Year to keep disease and evil from entering. It is said to have its origin in Susanō (see p. 22), who once, in return for a service, instructed a peasant, Sō-min, in this method of keeping out the plague god.

Taka-toki, is being troubled in his dreams by the attendance of Tengus.

Space will only allow of mention being made of another race of mythical creatures, the Shō-jōs (see Illustrations Nos.

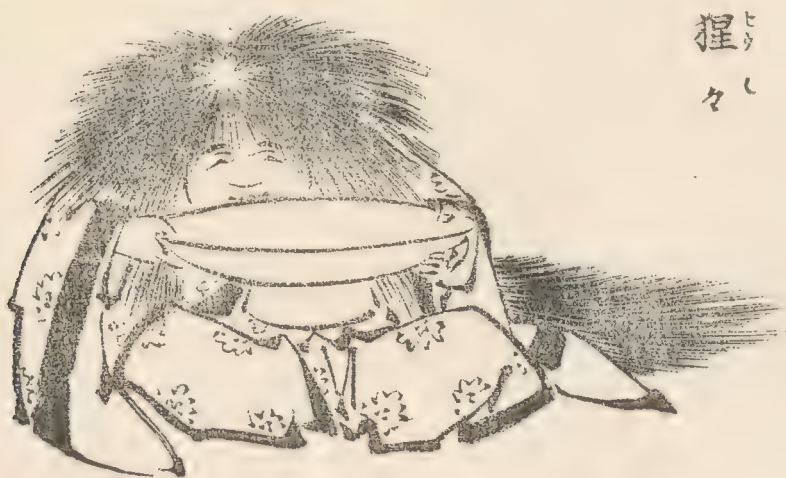


No. 42.—*Tengus troubling the Sleep of Sagami (or Takatoki?). After Hokusai.*

43, 44). These harmless beings are held up to Japanese children as examples of the fatal effects of drink. It appears that they have such an inordinate affection for saké, that whenever jars of this beverage are placed on the seashore

they cannot resist it; they are caught when hopelessly drunk, and their long red hair and blood are used for the valuable dyes which are extracted from them. "As drunk as a Shō-jō" is a Japanese proverb.

Instances of human beings turned into demons are not uncommon. For instance, Kiyo-himé, once an innkeeper's daughter, fell in love with a monk by name An-chin, and her passion not being returned, became so strong that it transformed her into a demoness, and as such she is depicted in our illustration. Could her back be seen, it would be found that she had assumed a dragon's tail. The story goes that



No. 43.—*A Shō-jō Drinking Saké. After Sensai.*

the monk, in order to avoid her importunities, had at last to hide himself under the bell of the monastery of Do-do-ji; but even here he could not escape, for with her tail and the bell-hammer Kiyo-himé beat it until, becoming red-hot, unfortunate An-chin was reduced to a cinder. (See Murray's "Japan," p. 187.)

Of mythical animals, there are several which become quite wearisome by their repeated use in Japanese ornament.

For instance, the Dragon (Tatsu or Riō). It is not perhaps utilised by the Japanese quite as frequently as by the Chinese; but they, like Western nations, have not failed to appreciate the wonderful adaptability of its lissome body to

all manner of ornament. The Japanese monster reached Japan through China, and is said to have originated in the Indian serpent. Probably the European dragon has the same parentage. According to Mr. Anderson the Japanese dragon is a composite monster with scowling head, long straight horns, a scaly serpentine body, a bristling row of dorsal spines, four limbs armed with claws, and curious flame-like appendages on its shoulders and hips. The claws are usu-



No. 44.—*Shō-jō Dancing.*
After Hokusai.

ally three on each foot, but are sometimes four and even five.

Japanese fairy stories are as full as our own of the doings of dragons, but they usually have a more benignant character than those which our children read about. In "Griffis's Fairy World" we have the child of the thunder, who, when he grew up, turned into a white dragon and disappeared in the clouds; the myriads of dragons round Mount Fuji; the carp which for its perseverance in ascending a waterfall became a dragon; and the dragon king

of the world under the sea.

The Buddhists have not hesitated to incorporate this monster into their system, and, as we saw in our last chapter, it is frequently found in attendance upon their goddesses Kwannon (see Illustration, p. 43) and Benten, and their Rakan. In their temples votaries may be seen prostrating themselves before large gaudily painted paper

dragons. It holds the post of Protector of the Faith. It also represents the majesty of the Emperor.

Mayers gives four kinds of Chinese dragons. The celestial dragon which guards the mansion of the gods; the spiritual dragon which causes the winds to blow and has the rainfall in its keeping (Illustration No. 38); the earth dragon which marks out the course of rivers, and the dragon of hidden treasures which watches over the wealth concealed from mortals. It will be noted that the dragon is usually accompanied by a ball of varied form, but usually spherical (see Illustrations Nos. 45 and 47). This is the gem of omnipotence. The Buddhist ornament Hoshi-notama is very similar. The yellow dragon is the most honoured of its kind.

The Japanese artist uses the dragon in every possible way for the purposes of adornment. As the holder for a fan, the gem forming the knob of the rivet, as the handle to a spoon, as a pouch ornament, upon sword guards, as a handle to bells (Illustration No. 45).



No. 45.—Netsuké in form of a Temple Bell. (Gilbertson Collection.)

The Tiger (Ko or Tora) was also imported by the Buddhists from India, *via* China; it is considered the king of the beasts, but not being indigenous to the country, artists are seldom happy in portraying it. It is very often depicted in a storm cowering beneath bamboos, symbolising the insignificant power of the mightiest of beasts as compared with that of the elements. When merely seen in connection with bamboos, it is so because its power is such that it can traverse a thousand miles at a stride, even through a bamboo forest.

The Ho, or Ho-ho, is more frequently drawn than almost any other bird, and from its being a combination of several,

is almost invariably wrongly named by foreigners. According to Mayers, it has "the head of a pheasant, the beak of a swallow, the neck of a tortoise, and the outward semblance of a dragon." This may be so in Chinese Art; but the Japanese artists usually make it up as a decoction of pheasant, bird of paradise, and peacock, treating its tail as regards shape and colour just as it suits their design. Further reason for its frequency in Art, besides its capability of artistic treatment, is, that its presence is significant of good in the near future; consequently it has usually appeared at the birth of those who afterwards attained to fame.



No. 46.—*Ho. From a Pouch Ornament. (Author's Collection.)*

The *Kirin*, a miserable combination of a deer (as to its body), a dragon (as to its head), and a lion (as to its mane and tail), is fortunately seldom met with in Art. It is, however, said to be the "noblest form of the animal creation, and an emblem of perfect good; it treads so lightly as to leave no footprints, and so cautiously as to crush no living creature." (Anderson, B. M. C., p. 220.)

Another monster which was alluded to in the first chapter (page 16), is the great earthquake-lish *Namazū*. The *Namazū* is not a very common object in Japanese Art, but more than one artist has devoted a whole volume to depicting its vagaries.

The Tortoise (*Kamé*) is one of the four sacred supernatural

creatures, the others being the dragon, tiger, and ho. The marvellously realistic representations of this reptile which have been produced in bronze by Sei-min do not represent the supernatural tortoise. This is almost always invested with a hairy tail of considerable proportions, in evidence of its being of a great age, for that appendage does not grow until it is at least five hundred years old. So it poses as the emblem of longevity, and when in addition it bears on its back the mountain of the immortals, it is figurative of strength. The origin of this tale is curious. Tortoises in Japan are subject to a growth of parasites, in the shape of *confervæ*, a plant which attaches itself to its shell. This, when the animal swims about, surrounds the under part of its back with long green locks called *mino gamé* from its resemblance to the grass coat worn by peasants in rainy weather. (See Illustrations Nos. 34 and 67). The marine turtle (Yasawa) grows to a great size. One was recently caught off Kazusa seven feet in diameter. Tortoise-shell is, however, usually imported.



No. 47.—*Lion Dog with the Sacred Gem. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)*

The Lion (Shi-shi) is not, I believe, a sacred animal in the eyes of the Japanese, although it is very often depicted as playing with or holding the sacred gem (Illustration No. 47). No one would recognise it from its portraits, for it is indued with a curly mane and tail, and tufts to its legs, which make its body quite a secondary appendage. It is of Corean origin, and usually figures in connection with the peony. They together symbolise regal power.

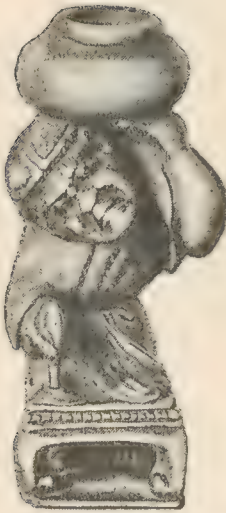
Other animals, such as foxes, which have supernatural attributes, will be treated of in the chapter upon animals.



No. 48.—*Ono-no-Komachi.*

CHAPTER VI.

FOLK-LORE AND LEGENDS.



No. 49.—*Gō-shi-sho*
holding up the
Brazier.

THE folk-lore, or legendary tales, which afford such never-ending subjects for the Japanese artist, are for many the most interesting of the fields which await exploration by the Western student. The novelty of the majority of the legends, the similitude of a few to those of other races, add a zest which is increased by the inability to gather anything from the undecipherable explanation which lies ready to hand on the face of every printed illustration of them.

Japan forms no exception to the rule as to the popularity of story-telling. Children imbibe with their mother's milk the legends woven into their nation's history, and old and young gather round the *hibachi* or (fire-brazier), as around our own hearths, to hear the oft-told stories of heroism and filial piety which form a necessary part of everybody's education.

As with everything else, a large portion of Japanese folk-lore is of Chinese origin: for instance, that connected with philosophers, sages, and filial piety. Fairy tales, on the other hand, are usually the product of the country.

The subject divides itself into the following headings:—Legends concerning philosophers and sages; those having their origin in history; those dealing with demons and genii; feats of strength, and skill in the use of weapons; fairy stories; stories of filial piety.

Amongst the philosophers who figure most frequently may be mentioned Confucius, Buddha, and Lao-Tsze (or Rō-shi), discussing the symbols of the Yang and Yin (see Mayer's "Ch. Reader's Manual," page 293); the same three tasting saké, and by their grimaces showing how differently it affects them; one thinking it sweet, another sour, and a third very bitter. According to some this would teach that great minds

can afford to differ about trifles; according to Anderson, "that the same religious principle, passing through the minds of different apostles, may become translated in various ways,



No. 50.—*The Three Saké Drinkers. From a Pouch Ornament. (Author's Collection.)*

according to the idiosyncrasies of its promulgators."

Lao-tsze or Rō-shi, who was the originator of the Taoist philosophy, is often seen riding on an ox; he is bald-headed, large-eared, and long-bearded. Saigiō Hoshi (teacher of the law) is also often represented as an old priest riding a bullock. He is usually in ecstasies at the sight of Mount Fuji; a figure of him will be found at page 152. Kiō-yo (Hü-Yeo) and his friend Sōfu (Ch'ao Fu) were philosophic hermits. The former is depicted more than once on my metal-work kneeling at a stream and washing from his ear the taint of worldly ambition which had been conveyed to him in an offer by his emperor of a high post at court. He is distinguishable from the Rishi Li-Peh (Jap. Rihaku),

who gazes in fervour at a waterfall, by his being usually associated with Ch'ao Fu, who leads his ox away from the stream, that it may not drink of the contaminated water. The seven sages who met in a bamboo grove, and held to a doctrine "that human happiness consisted in emancipation from cares and worries and unrestrained indulgence in wine" (Thornton's "History of China"), are frequently found on ceramics, lacquer and metal-work. Another sage, Sō-sha (Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue," page 241), is often painted; he may be recognised by his hat of enormous width, and his riding on a mule through a snow-clad landscape. One of great renown, Kio-shiga or Taikōbo (Kiang-Tsze-yo), is to be seen fishing in order to rid himself of the wrangling of a discontented wife, and to be able to muse undisturbed upon "astronomy, geography, and the art of warfare"! He used a straight pin and no bait. It is also said that the fish thought so highly of him that they insisted on holding on to this and being caught, and that he looked so wise over this pursuit that the emperor accosted him one day and requested him to become his prime minister.

In the Illustration No. 51 will be seen the Buddhist Dharma or Daruma, who, arriving in China in the sixth century, at once went into a state of abstraction, which extended over nine years, during which time he never moved; as a result he lost the use of his legs. The netsuké makers are very fond of treating him in all sorts of attitudes, usually without legs, scowling from a bag; the representations here given show him rending his garments and recovering his legs.

Other personages of Chinese origin are Kan-shin, showing an example of moral courage in crawling between the legs of a low fellow who had insulted him, rather than have a disturbance; Yo-jo (Ch. Yu Jang), who stabs his sword into the garment of the man who had murdered his king, and whom he had sworn to kill. This he had failed more than once to do, owing to his foe's generosity, so he implored the latter to throw him his mantle, and he satisfied his conscience by stabbing it first, and then committing suicide.

The frequently depicted scene of a man handing another a shoe illustrates an adventure in the life of Chorío (Chang Liang), a counsellor of the founder of the Han dynasty. In early life he encountered a poor and aged man, Kōsékiko, who



No. 51.— *Daruma in contemplation, and Daruma stretching himself.* From Netsukés.
(Author's Collection.)

had lost his sandal; this he promptly restored, and in return received a volume, from which he derived all the wisdom which distinguished his counsels (Mayers, p. 8). He is also seen in a river, seated upon a dragon, which he had con-

quered, handing the shoe to Kōsékiko, who is on horseback on a bridge.

Foremost among Japanese legends are those connected with the country's martial glory. We have already written of one, Také-no-uchi-no-sukuné (see p. 27), who lived at least three decades for every syllable in his name, and served under six emperors.

A warrior equally ancient but of more ferocious mien than Také-no-uchi is the Chinese god of war, Kwan-yu, who lived in the second century, but is still a popular personage in both empires. He wears Chinese garments and a black beard which reaches to his waist, and which he is usually engaged in stroking. He carries a formidable spear and is accompanied by a repulsive-looking attendant. A frequent subject, especially on sword furniture, is believed by Mr. Gilbertson to be either connected with Kwan-yu, or more probably with Hideyoshi, Kwan-yu being always represented with a long beard. It represents a warrior, seated, with a retainer behind him, and another approaching with reverential mien. This must not be confounded with Kwan-yu receiving the envoy (in civil costume), who comes to try and gain him over from his allegiance to his emperor.

An early legend also is that of Yamato Daké (Illustration No. 52), surrounded by the flaming grass which his enemies, the Yebis, whom he was sent to subdue, had set fire to, and saving himself by the wonderful mowing qualities of his Murakumo blade, which is said to have been the identical one which Susano (see p. 24) got from the dragon's tail.

We have already alluded (p. 28) to the great hero Yoshitsuné and his henchman Benkei; a volume could be filled with the episodes in their lives which find a place in Art. Besides those already mentioned, and illustrated in the second chapter, there are many varieties of the battles of Yashima and Ujigawa. It was at the former that Yoshitsuné rode into the water to secure a broken bow which a party of the enemy were endeavouring to grapple with boat-hooks. It was at the latter that he ordered the bridge Ujihashi (see Illustration 20) to be dismantled, and the

soldiers to swim across, when the episode of Kagésuyé and Taka-tsuna occurred. Both these warriors were eager to have the credit of being over first. Take-tsuna, who was on the slowest horse, was soon left behind, whereupon he called



Nō. 52. — Yamato Daké putting out the Flames.

out, "Kagésuyé, your horse's girth is loose." Kagésuyé stopped, Taka-tsuna passed him, and reached the opposite bank first, both riding unharmed through a shower of arrows. Yoshitsuné's headlong ride down a mountain side, so precipitous that only deer and wild boar could descend it,

is also sometimes portrayed. So, too, is Sasaki no Taka-tsuna crossing the river at the battle of Ujigawa in the midst of a shower of arrows, which he wards off with his sword. He is recognisable by his crest of four hollow squares arranged in the form of a lozenge. Benkei's feats include his stealing the bell of Mi-i-dera, his writing on the plum-tree at Amagasaki to save it from damage, and his death amidst a shower of arrows. Kusunoki Masashigé (p. 31) dictating his will before killing himself is another common subject. Nitan killing the wild boar is often found, especially on netsukés, where he seizes it by the tail, or jumps on its back.

A prettier legend than any of these is that of Ōta Dokwan and the peasant girl. This warrior, overtaken by the rain, begged of the latter the loan of a grass rain-coat (*mino*). Without replying she ran off to the garden, plucked a camellia, handed it to Ōta, and ran away. Ōta went off in a huff, only to find out afterwards that this was a polite way of saying she had no coat; for had not a poet centuries before written of this flower, "Although the mountain camellia has seven petals, yet I grieve to say it has no seed (*mino*)."¹ Griffis tells the story, which he says is still preserved in poetry, song, Art, and local lore, in his "Mikado's Empire," page 265.

The story of Ono-no-Komachi (Illustration No. 48) has been a favourite one with artists of every description for centuries. A wondrous beauty, one of Japan's six greatest poets, the idol of the court, a miserable old hag, her corpse the prey of dogs—in these successive epochs of her life, the painter and the sculptor have frequently portrayed her. We see her showing the magic of her poetry by drawing down rain in a period of drought by her recitations, and washing a volume of poems to prove by their erasure by the water that certain lines recently inscribed by a rival were not hers. Another court beauty who sank to indigence was Seishō-nagon. Quickness in grasping a quotation was highly esteemed in olden days, and this fair lady is usually shown in the act of raising a blind and showing the winter-landscape, thus displaying her aptness at recognising an allusion. Another of

the poetesses, Murasaki Shikibu, receives frequent notice at the hands of the artists, as she sits in the moonlight in the temple of Ishi-yama-dera overlooking Lake Biwa, and composes the great romance of the Genji Monogatari (see *post*, p. 112).

The story of the "oil thief," as he is sometimes called, is



No. 53.—*Capture of the Oil Thief. From a Sword-Guard.*
(Gilbertson Collection.)

an amusing one. Takamochi, founder of the Taira family (ninth century), was once accompanying the Mikado on a nocturnal escapade, when in one of the streets of Kyōto they met what in the rain they mistook for a demon, with flames of fire emerging from his head. The emperor retreated in haste, but the valiant Takamochi went for the demon and threw

him. According to some the demon was only an oil thief on his way to steal oil from the lamps; according to others it was an old bonze or priest, on his round of lighting the lamps. Whichever it was, the artist always arrays him in the peasant's grass coat (*mino*) and straw hat (Illustration No. 53).

The noble playing the flute in No. 54 is Hirai Yasumasa (Hō-sho), a contemporary of Yorimitsu (Raiko). The would-be assassin is Hakamaderé Korésuké, a notorious freebooter,



No. 54.—Hirai Yasumasa and the freebooter Hakamaderé Korésuké.

who could not murder him on account of his captivating but commanding attitude during his flute-playing. Flute-playing was much indulged in by the fashionables, and fine-toned flutes became celebrated and of great value.

Another story connected with music is frequently illustrated. In the tenth century there was a great musician, a nobleman named Hakuga-no-Sammi. A greater than he, Semi-Mono, lived in retirement, and none could fathom the mystery of a melody which he played on his lute. Hakuga for three years listened in vain at his gate, but one autumn evening he heard

the tune, and when it was ended he further heard the musician say, "Alas, that there should be none to whom to transmit this precious possession!" The dénouement is, of course, that the nobleman enters, makes himself known, and becomes Semi's pupil.

Ono-no-Takamura (or Ono-no-tofu), a celebrated and noble artist of the tenth century, and the toad play in Japanese Art the part of Robert Bruce and the spider, as he learns the lesson of perseverance by watching the creature seven times attempt to jump to the willow bough, and at last succeed.

Endo Mongaku, the unfortunate penitent, who for one-and-



No. 55.—*Endo Mongaku under the Nachi Waterfall.*

twenty days stood under the icy torrent of Nachi, is often portrayed by metal-workers who wish to show their skill. At a temple at Meguro there is a waterfall under which penitents are still wont to stand to wash away their sin. Fudo, the god of the lower world, or his messenger, bearing the wand of pardon, is a usual accessory of Endo's. Fudo, "the immovable one," who is identical with Dainichi Nyorai, the god of wisdom, has usually as accompaniments, a sword, representing intelligence, flames, typical of wisdom, and a rope to bind evil-doers. He is the patron of waterfalls, although represented as surrounded by flames. Although a

popular Buddhist deity in Japan, little is known of him in China. He often appears on sword furniture.

There are many legends in which demons and *genii** take a prominent part. Principal amongst these must be reckoned the stories of Yorimitsu (or Raiko), and the Shiuten Doji, and Watanabé and the demon spider. These are too long to tell here, but they may be studied in a remarkably graphic series of drawings in the British Museum (Nos. 285 and 303—416); and Mr. Anderson devotes a considerable space to them in his catalogue. The latter legend also finds a place upon sword furniture (Illustration No. 111), and is easily recognisable. So too does the encounter of Watanabé with the Oni: first the Oni's seizure of him by the helmet; next the Oni's discomfiture and loss of his arm, which is borne away triumphantly by Watanabé; then the warrior beguiled by the old woman and losing his trophy.

Amongst feats of strength will be found those of Asaina Saburō in his combats with Matano-no-Gorō and Soga-no-Gorō. He may be seen wrestling, warding off rocks thrown down upon him, struggling with sharks, etc. So, too, Gōshi-sho (Wu Yün), a Chinese general, who showed his strength and learning in a competition by composing and writing a stanza whilst holding up a three-legged koro, called *kanayé*, weighing one thousand pounds (Illustration No. 49). One of the most striking modern pictures in the British Museum collection is Hokusai's *Tamétomo* holding his bow against the united efforts of four demons, during their visit to their island home, Onigashima. Then there is *Kni-taro*, or *Kintoki*, the child of the forest, the boys' idol, who is usually depicted on their kites wielding an enormous axe, or wrestling with the *tengus* or a wild boar.

There are also many instances of skill in the use of weapons,

* The queen of the *genii*, *Sei-ō-bō*, is usually depicted as a Chinese princess, with two female attendants carrying a fan and the peaches of longevity. According to Anderson, the assemblage of the *Rishis* at her mountain home in Central Asia is one of the common Art motives of the old Chinese and Japanese artists. She must not be mistaken for the dragon queen, who is usually represented clothed in robes of shells and coral.

particularly the bow. Amongst these may be cited the oft-illustrated tale of the death of the nuyé (which had the head of a monkey, the back of a badger, the feet of a tiger, and the tail of a snake) at the hands of Minamoto-no-Yorimasa and his follower, Iino-Hayata, illustrated in Mr. Anderson's Catalogue, page 389. So, too, Hidesato killing the giant centipede which infested Lake Biwa with an arrow from a bow which required five men to pull it, is the subject of an oft-illustrated fairy tale.

Urashima (Illustration No. 56) may be termed the Japanese Rip Van Winkle. He, in following his calling as a fisherman, caught a tortoise, which, as we have seen (page 63), lives to a great age. He had compassion on the animal and spared its life, where-



No. 56.— *Urashima. From an Ivory Okimono. (Tomkinson Collection.)*

upon it was transformed into a beautiful princess, in whose boat and company he rode away to the "Air Castle" (Illustration No. 1). After a space of three years, as he supposed, he prevailed upon the princess to allow him to

return home. She gave him on leaving a casket, which he was not to open if he wished to see her again. On his arrival at his birthplace he found that the last of his family had been dead many hundreds of years. He was then tempted to open the casket, whereupon he suddenly changed into a wrinkled old man, and his spirit passed into a crane. In this form he rejoined the tortoise, and lived happily for ten thousand years. A ballad on the subject is to be found in "Manyefushifu," dated A.D. 760.

A badger emerging from a tea-kettle (Illustration No. 57) is a favourite subject of the netsuké and pouch-ornament makers. The kettle belonged to a priest, and one day on its



No. 57.—*The Badger in the Tea-kettle.*
From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)

being put on the fire sprouted out with a badger's head, legs and tail. The priest did not like this, and sold the kettle to a tinker, who made such a fortune out of exhibiting it, that at last he retired, and presented it to the temple whence it came, where it received saintly honours.

The tongue-cut sparrow story (Illustration No. 58) has of late years been very popular, even on such

inappropriate objects as sword-guards. The legend, which is to be found in Mitford, is of a woman who, annoyed by the sparrows whilst washing, catches one and cuts out its tongue. Her husband, with whom it was a favourite, goes to the forest to find it, is there hospitably entertained by the sparrow family, and on leaving is offered his choice of two baskets, one much larger than the other. Being old and infirm, he selects the lesser one. Upon his return home he opens it and finds it full of gems. He is upbraided by his better half for his selection, and she goes off and obtains the larger one. Upon opening this, goblins emerge; even the cords which bind it are transformed into vipers, and these together soon make an end of her.

Momotarō, or Little Peachling (Illustration No. 59), is also very popular. Netsukés display the peach opening and the baby issuing from the kernel. His journey to the ogres' island, accompanied by the ape, the pheasant, and the dog, and his capture of the castle and treasures, is found upon pouch ornaments, etc. The old woodcutter who adopted Momotarō must not be confounded with the amiable old Chinaman, T'ung Fang-so, or Tōbōsaku, who ate three peaches, and lived in consequence to the age of nine thousand years. He is usually well dressed, and carries one or more of the peaches in his hand.

Amandreaming that he sees an imperial procession coming to court, offers a test of skill which the Japanese are not slow to avail themselves of.



No. 58.—*The Tongue-cut Sparrow. From a Sword-Guard. (Author's Collection.)*

I have a remarkable rendering, not an inch square, in metalwork. The dreamer is Rosei, who has for a thousand years been typical of the vanity of human greatness. He passed in a dream from poverty to wealth, from insignificance to greatness, through a lifetime replete with events, in the space occupied by the preparation of his supper. The subject is frequently caricatured.

There are some hundred stories of filial piety of Chinese

origin, and a quantity which are distinctly of native growth. Twenty-four, however, is the number of the paragons which the Japanese affect. Mr. Anderson gives a diagram of these in his Museum Catalogue. Those most frequently met with are Mō-sō, whose piety was illustrated in our first chapter (p. 12); Yōko, who clung to a tiger which had sprung at her father, and saved him; Gomō, who would not drive away the mosquitoes which stung him, lest they should settle on his



No. 59.—*The Birth of Little Peachling.*
From a Netsuke. (Author's Collection.)

parents; and Shiba-on-ko (Sze-ma Kwang), having the sense, notwithstanding its value, to break the water jar into which one of his playmates had fallen (Mayers, 199).

There is little room left to describe the anthropological and zoological myths, which add nothing to Art except repulsive ugliness. They too hail from China, and Mr. Anderson considers that the Japanese have added to them all that is interesting and amusing. Those oftenest met with are Long Arms and Long Legs helping one another to fish, Whirling Neck craning his head over and round his fellows, and the vampire women, whose lower extremities die away into mist.

For further details the reader is referred to Anderson's "British Museum Catalogue," Griffis's "Fairy Stories," and Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan."

CHAPTER VII.

JAPANESE MANNERS AND CUSTOMS.

HAVING completed our glance at the land of Japan, its history, religions, and folk-lore, our attention must now be directed towards some of the queries which arise out of almost every representation which we encounter of the personalities and the manners and customs of the inhabitants of that country.

As yet the Japanese artist has confined himself to the delineation of his countrymen as they existed prior to the introduction of Western fashions. Some of the illustrations to this chapter show how these latter are invading the land, but they are furnished from a foreign source. The long line of native artists whose works, extending over several centuries, are preserved to us, were always conservative and restrained by traditions. They loved to dwell upon the glories of the past, and to limn the lineaments of those who have become illustrious in their nation's history. It was not until early in the last century, after many years of profound peace, and when the people had apparently tired of the constant repetition of the doings of their deities and warriors, that any variation occurred. The fashion then arose for popular actors to have their portraits executed in their most gorgeous dresses, and acting their favourite plays. Chromo-xylography having just come to the front, the artist was enabled to do some justice to the magnificent wardrobes which have for centuries been, and still are, the pride of the principal theatres. So, too, the delineation of the Japanese in his rags as well as in his

finery was thought of, and to artists taken from amongst the masses we owe those photographic portraits of humble life which give us almost all the information we can desire con-



No. 60.—*Japanese Workmen and Conjurers.* From Hokusai's *Man-gwa*.

cerning it. Had it not been for these we might have imagined that everybody in Japan was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.

The principal source, undoubtedly, from whence we gather

our ideas upon Japanese life is the illustrated books* and leaflets which now find their way here in such prodigious numbers. Little of what they contain can be understood by those who are strangers to the language, but that little can



No. 61.—*A Fashionable Call. From "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan." See p. 91.*

be increased by a comprehension of the social status, dress, and habits of the society which they illustrate.

* It may be worth while to mention that Japanese books commence at what to us is the end: a remembrance of this is a great aid to their unravelling.

Let us then consider what these are, or, I should say, were, for I shall only deal with them as they existed prior to the Revolution of 1868.

The effigy of the Emperor seldom finds a place in Art. The rôle assumed by him and his surroundings has always



No. 62.—*A Daimyo's Lady. From an Inro. (Author's Collection.)*

been that he was too far above ordinary mortals to be spoken of or written about; his face was hidden from the view of his subjects, and his portrait can always be recognised by his legs and feet only being seen below a sort of Venetian blind made of bamboo. The Shōgun, on the contrary, frequently appears in Art.

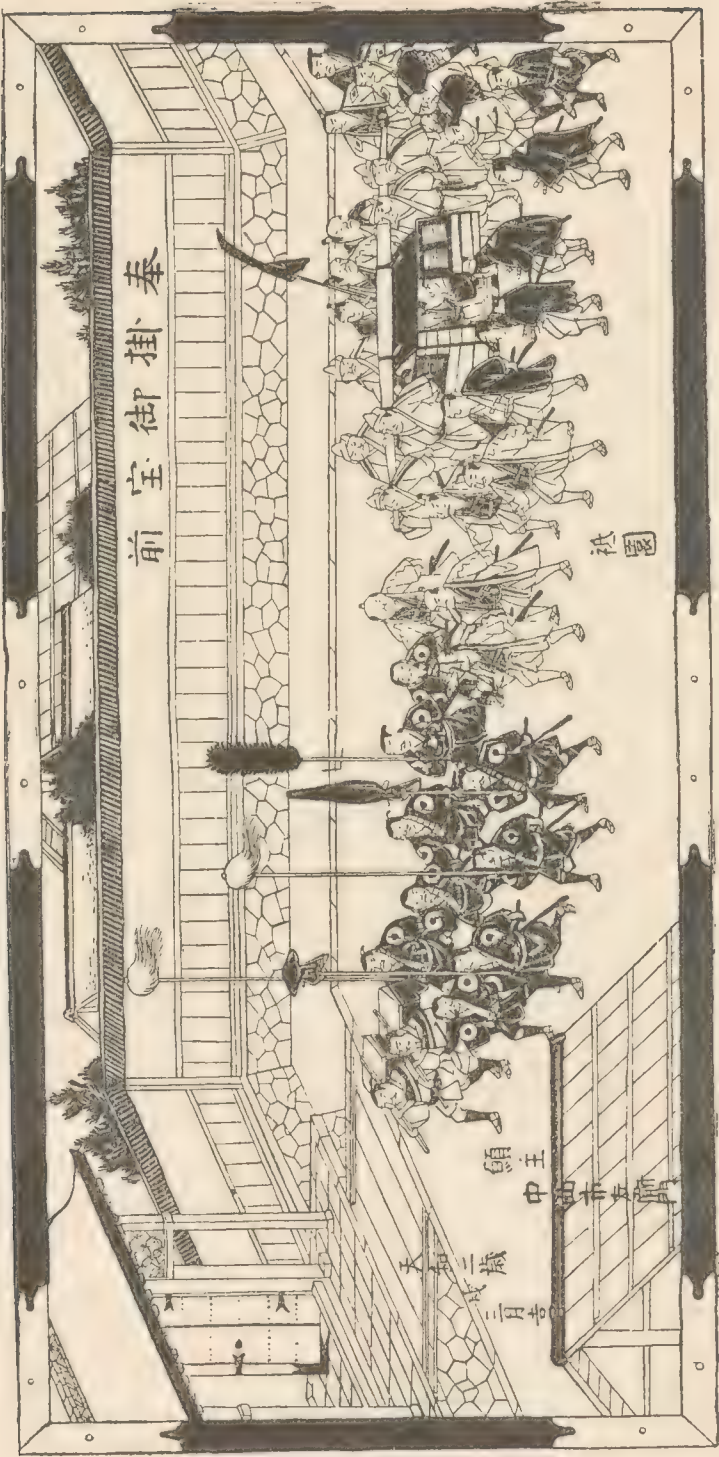
The dual government which existed between the Emperor

and Shōgun has already been explained (page 29). We will therefore commence our survey of society with the next grade, namely, the Daimyos, each of whom was a feudal lord, king in all but name, of his own territory, and with a revenue which in many instances amounted to a quarter of a million sterling. These maintained both at their town and country palaces a small army of retainers, and the pomp, display, colour and movement afforded by their frequent progresses through the country must have been a feast for the artistic eye. A representation of a visit of ceremony is portrayed at page 84, and it is a frequent subject in the adornment of screens, walls of houses, and the makimono or illustrated rolls. The illustration (No. 62) represents the wife of a daimyo seated on a throne (the daimyo is on the reverse), but it is probably only a doll dressed as such. (See doll's festival, p. 26.)

Besides these there was at the court of the Emperor a nobility, the Kugé, consisting of 155 families, all affecting imperial descent; these, from being for twelve centuries the governing class, lost both power and possessions by the advent to power of the Shōgun. Many of them pursued the profession of Art. Their poverty was a frequent theme for the caricaturist.

Next in order came the military, who filled most of the offices of state. At the time of the Revolution these numbered about two out of the thirty-six million inhabitants. The position occupied by this body could only be explained at some length, but it cannot be passed over, for its doings are always cropping up in Art.

For a thousand years the people of Japan have been divided by law into two classes, the military and the civil. The former during all that period have not only monopolised arms, but the literature, the patriotism, and the intellect of the country. This division produced the *Samurai*, who at his best was all that was ideal in a man. In fact, the poet writes of him, "Should any ask of the heart of the *Samurai*, show him the wild cherry fragrant in the morning sunshine," *i.e.*, strong beauty, bright promise, and refined purity, throwing abroad its perfume on a summer morn. To support him and



No. 63.—A Visit of Ceremony. From a sixteenth-century picture.

his, the country was taxed to the extent of nearly four millions a year, an imposition which was only commuted in 1876. But as the *Samurai's* code of honour would not allow him to work or engage in business, it is not surprising to hear that the majority of them were idle fellows, who only obeyed their lord, whom they protected on the battle-field or against his murderers, and for whom they were willing at any time to die, even by their own hand, if honour required it. In a novel "*Chiushin-gura*," which is written in praise of Japanese chivalry, we find a proverb, "Slaughter and rapine, *Samurai's* daily deeds!" Upon festive occasions they appeared very bravely dressed, not perhaps quite so cap-a-pie as the general in our illustration (No. 64), but not a great way removed from him in point of magnificence. It is difficult to believe that such a cumbrous uniform was worn later than what we should term the Middle Ages, but the isolation of Japan prevented her utilising the discoveries of modern warfare, and her soldiery



No. 64.—*Suke-tsuné, a Japanese general.*

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were arrayed somewhat like this until well within the memory of many now living. The dress need not be described, for there are few curiosity shops which are without a suit, and a very fair one may be purchased for about £3. Some of the old helmets included in such suits are marvels of workmanship. As avengers of their lord's murder, these Samurai appear over and over again in Japanese Art. They are distinguishable in their ordinary dress by their wearing on their kimono, on each sleeve, between the shoulders, and on each side of the breast, the family badge; also short hose reaching below the calves. But carrying two swords was their great and most prized privilege, and even their young children were indulged with imitation ones. "The sword is the soul of the Samurai" is a Japanese motto. This may well be, when their other equally-prized privilege was the Harakiri, more properly, Seppuku, called in Europe "Happy Despatch," for which their second and shorter sword was kept. This terrible mode of suicide is also a frequent subject in pictorial art. The ceremony is given in detail in Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan."

The *Samurai* is now a being of the past. The places in which he once swaggered know him no more; his home has been razed and its site converted into pasturage (Murray's "Japan," page 190).

As the warrior was to all outward appearance a very different sort of being to his descendant of to-day, so the lady whom the artist has delighted to delineate as the belle of his mediæval story, differs from those of her sex who now people the cities. The lady in the picture books is not handsome, but that was not the fault of the model, but of a system which compelled the artist to draw her features after certain rules which he dare not transgress. Examine any one of the volumes of celebrated beauties, and they are all precisely alike. Two slits, very far apart, for eyes; two black bars high up on her forehead to serve the place of her shaved-off eyebrows; a long, slightly aquiline nose, and tiny mouth, and a long, oval, swollen-cheeked countenance. She wears a trailing robe of silks of the most varied patterns, and her raven tresses sweep the ground.

The various highly ornamented articles which we encounter witness to how this lady passed her time. The fukusas show her skill with the needle; the ko-bako tells of her favourite pastime of the perfume-game (of which we shall speak further on); and her playing cards, the pleasure she experienced in writing stanzas of poetry. Whilst the male sex devoted themselves to the study of Chinese, the females cultivated their native tongue, with the result that a large proportion of the best writings in Japanese literature are the work of women.

It has often been remarked that the Japanese as represented in books and those we see in the flesh in Europe have but little resemblance. The reason is this: in Japan, as in many other countries, the race is divided into two almost distinct families: the nobility, descended from the gods, with long visage, pale complexion, high forehead, aquiline nose, small mouth, and eyes placed obliquely; this family is found in the environs of Kyōto and the province of Yamato, which is the cradle of the race; it is the one which all the painters, save the popular ones, have, with but little variation, taken as their model. The other branch, which inhabits the western side of the empire, facing China, have a short face, olive complexion, low forehead, projecting cheek bones, snub nose, eyes horizontally placed and widely opened. There is a third family of Ainus, but these inhabit the northernmost island of the empire, where Art has never yet penetrated, and consequently any delineation of their forms or features seldom finds a place on Japanese wares. The women when they marry shave off the eyebrows and blacken the teeth.

As regards the size of the Japanese, it is quite the exception to find a big man, and still rarer a fine woman. Their average height is five feet, the females being somewhat less. As a rule they are strong, and able to undergo much fatigue, and feats of strength are much admired and envied. One of their principal amusements is wrestling, which is also very commonly portrayed in Art.

Miss Bird is very severe on the looks of the people. She states that in her peregrinations, extending over 1,400 miles,

she saw nothing even resembling passable good-looks. But a gallant officer (Major Knollys) writes very differently in his "Sketches of Life in Japan," and so does the observant Rein, who says, "In reality, the female sex is more beautiful than the ideal of native artists."

A constant source of complaint with European critics of Japanese Art is that the human figure is never drawn correctly, and they querulously ask why should not the same brush which can model with such marvellous accuracy the lower orders of creation, be able to portray that other part of it which the artists of the Western hemisphere have always held to be the highest type of beauty? They who complain have little knowledge of the surroundings under which work is produced.

Let us shortly compare the opportunities which a Japanese and a European artist have of modelling the human figure.

The European starts with a conviction that the human figure is the most glorious piece of God's handiwork. He has constantly before him not only perfect specimens in flesh and blood, but ideal creations of the genius of former ages. In his schools he has the anatomy of each component part explained to him, and he has to pass through a long course of study of the skeleton and the subcutaneous portions of the body before he arrives at a stage when he may draw it clothed in flesh.

The Japanese, on the other hand, is taught by his religion that the human body is a vile carcase of no worth, a frail and corrupt mass, which is only destined to rot and waste away. Taking the average of the specimens of humanity which he sees around him, it would perhaps be hard to believe otherwise. In his schools he is only allowed to study from the works of the old masters, who had a certain formula by which to draw the human frame. Whilst the savants of his country are versed in the anatomy and properties of every flower of the field, they are absolutely ignorant of the component parts of the human frame, so he has nothing from which he can learn.*

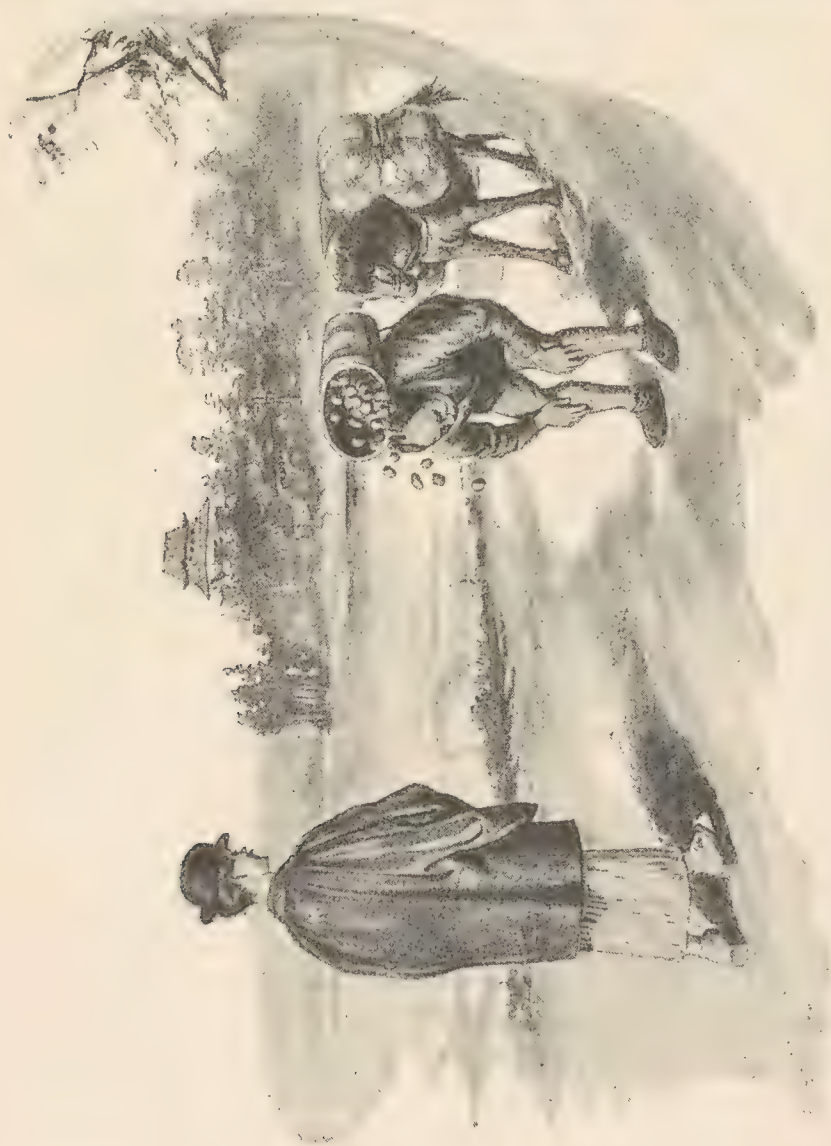
* I have a modern text-book on the subject, which is copied from a Dutch work on Anatomy, and is quite ludicrous in its incorrectness.

There is every reason to affirm that had the Japanese the same facilities and inducements as have our artists, he could show them the way to draw the human figure almost as perfectly as he now does the birds and the flowers. As a proof of this, I would point to the fact that the sculptors, who have apparently been restrained by no traditions, often limn it perfectly. There is little fault either to be found with the work of the draughtsmen of the popular schools who learnt upon lines of their own framing.

The dress of the people of all classes is similar in shape, but with certain variations of cut which mark the rank of the wearer. The usual and often the only garment, both male and female, is the *kimono*, which opens down the front, the neck being exposed, and resembles our dressing-gown. It is kept in place by a sash (*obi*), which is the principal adornment, especially of the ladies; it is wound round the body more than once, and is tied behind in a very large and carefully formed butterfly bow with long streamers. This belt held the swords. The large and wide sleeves form bags in which are kept, amongst other things, a supply of paper to serve as pocket-handkerchiefs. The ladies' full-dress *kimono* has a train several feet in length, stiffened with wadding, as has the court-dress of gentlemen. Among the higher orders the summer *kimono* is of light cotton, the winter of heavy silk. At the latter season all classes wear trousers and stockings, but these are usually only retained by well-to-do people in warm weather.

The styles of wearing the hair have been very varied. At one time the males shaved it from their foreheads to the middle of the scalp, and bound the long cue into a top-knot which was turned forward and laid on the scalp. This was in order that the helmet might fit comfortably, and that the hair might not cumber the eyes in fighting. This custom gradually spread to all classes. The fashions as regards children were equally marked. In older representations their heads are shaved except a circlet of hair round their tonsure, or three locks on the crown. The ladies lavish an immense amount of pains on their head-dress, which, in addition to innumer-

able fashions of plaiting the hair, which vary according to rank and locality, also consists of combs and hair-pins of the most varied kind and material. These have formed the subject of more than one European collector's fancy, and the South



No. 65.—Saluting the New Costume. From “*Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan.*”

Kensington Museum acquired a miscellaneous collection in 1888. At present the fashion is almost entirely confined to the demi-monde.

Any covering for the head is the exception, in spite of the

heat of the sun. When one is worn, it is an almost flat circular hat made of reeds, which is a protection against sun and rain, and which is often so big as to be taken for an umbrella. As a shelter from rain, a straw-plaited coat fastened round the neck is used by the lower classes, as are cloaks of oiled paper (*mino*) and, of course, the umbrella. Cotton socks (*tabi*) are worn, in which the big toe only is divided from the rest to serve as a holdfast for the strap of the rice-straw sandals, or of the clog. The former wear out very quickly, cost next to nothing, and can only be used in dry weather. Those which have been cast away litter everywhere the sides of the road. In wet weather wooden clogs, which raise the diminutive wearer a couple of inches, are worn.

Sandals are always taken off on entering a house, even if it be a shop, so as not to injure or dirty the dainty mats. Foreigners are continually hurting the feelings of the Japanese by a failure to observe this custom, which is not easily observed with lace-up boots. How awkward strangers look when they attempt it may be seen from the Illustration No. 61, taken from "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan,"* a most amusing and ably illustrated record of the country at the present day

No notice of the dress of a Japanese would be complete without a mention of the fan, which is carried by every one from the generalissimo of the army to the scavenger. Gentlemen affect only white paper of the shape usually worn by ladies in the West, coloured ones and those of the leaf-shape (*uchiwa*) being used by women and children. It is even utilised for passing things on, such as letters, or as a substitute for a plate.† An order for a million *uchiwa* shaped fans was recently placed in Japan at 800 dollars.

Besides a fan a gentleman wears, or perhaps one should say wore, a pipe and tobacco pouch and a medicine case (*inro*). Merchants also carried a portable inkstand and pen (*yataté*).

The common people are divided into the following classes

* Leipzig: T. O. Weigel.

† A fan or winged wand is carried by the queen of the world under the sea.

—peasants, handicraftsmen, shopkeepers, Geishas (female dancers and singers*) and Jôrô's (prostitutes).

The condition of the Japanese agricultural peasant or farmer, cut off as he has been from all chance of an improvement of his lot, has never been a happy one. Left to the soil to till it, to live and die upon it, he has remained the same to-day as he was when first his class was assigned the lower place. He is thus described by Mr. Griffis, who passed several years in the country :—"Like the wheat that he has



No. 66.—*A Farmer surveying his Rice Crop.*

planted for successive ages, the peasant, with his horizon bounded by his rice-fields, his watercourses, or the timbered hills, his intellect laid away for safe keeping in the priest's hands, is the son of the soil; caring little who rules him, unless he is taxed beyond the power of flesh and blood to bear, or an over-meddlesome officialdom touches his land, to transfer, sell, or redivide it: then he rises as a rebel. In time of war he is a disinterested and a passive spectator, for he does not fight." See him as depicted by a popular artist, in the above illustration, watching his rice-field. His cloth-

See Chapter VIII., p. 108.

ing can in ordinary weather hardly be designated by that title. In this respect he differs from his neighbour the Corean, who is so bashful and self-conscious that even under the hottest sun he will not divest himself of a single garment. When the Japanese wears anything it is a brilliantly blue cotton kimono nearly reaching to the ground, with, in the case of the women, a scarlet sash.

Miss Bird states that: "It was somewhat remarkable to see telegraph wires above men whose only clothing was a sun hat and fan, and alongside their children returning from school well clothed, and with books and slates."

Unfortunately the picturesque dress of Japan appears to be doomed. Almost all officials are bound to appear when on duty in European dress, which is neither so becoming nor healthy as their own. But a Japanese cannot be brought to understand this.



No. 66A.—An "Odd Volume." After Hokusai.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOME LIFE.

“The land of gentle manners and fantastic arts.”—*Sir Edwin Arnold.*

THE Japanese house principally differs from that of other nations in its want of substantiality. It is fixed to no foundations, for it merely rests upon unhewn stones placed at intervals beneath it, and it usually consists of a panel-work of wood either unpainted, or painted black on the exterior face; sometimes it is of plaster, but this is the exception. Its roof is either shingled, tiled,* or thatched with hay (*kaya*). No chimneys break its sky line, for fires are seldom used. Where they are, their smoke issues from a hole left at the top of the angle of the gable. The worst side of the house is usually turned towards the street, the artistic towards the garden. The houses, as a rule, evidence the fact that the nation is poor, and that the Japanese does not launch out beyond his means, or what he can reinstate when it is destroyed, as it most probably will be during his lifetime, by fire or earthquake. Two at least of the sides of the house have no permanent walls, and the same applies to almost every partition in the interior. These are merely screens, called *fusuma* or *karakami*, fitting into grooves, which admit of easy and frequent removal. Those on the exterior when of wood are called *amado*, but when covered with white paper *shoji*:

* End tiles are often copied in miniature as ornaments, and those from famous buildings are much prized as curios both in China and Japan, being often used as inkstones (*suzuri*), on which to rub the Indian ink. An inkstone used by a celebrated calligraphist is much prized.



No. 67.—*A Marriage Ceremony, after Utagawa Toyokuni. From Anderson's 'Pictorial Arts of Japan.'*

these allow the light to penetrate; the shadows thrown upon them, when the light is inside, find many a place in the pages of the caricaturists. The interior screens are of thick paper, and are usually decorated with paintings. The rooms in the house are for the most part small and low; one can almost always easily touch the ceilings. The size of each is planned out most accurately according to the number of mats which it will take to cover the floor. These mats are always of the same size, namely, about 72 inches by 36 inches.* The rooms are also rectangular and without recesses, save in the guest room, where there are two, called *toko-noma* and *chigai-dana*. In the *toko-noma* are hung the *kakémono*, or pictures, and on its floor, which is raised above the rest of the compartment, vases with flowers, an incense burner, a figure of the household god, etc., are placed. In our illustration, No. 67, where a middle-class wedding ceremony is taking place, there are three *kakémono* behind the *chigai-dana*, and their appropriateness will be recognised, for they illustrate the hairy-tailed tortoise, cranes, and *Juro-jin*, all emblems of longevity. Weddings are celebrated at night, hence the use of the lanterns (*shokudai*) and the delineation of the black sky outside; the bride is drinking saké from a cup, this being done several times by both parties; the other persons include the parents, and the go-betweens who have arranged the match; all are in full dress (*kamishimo*); before the bride is a wooden pedestal for placing the saké-cups upon; in front of the two bridesmaids in the foreground are bowls with handles, containing the saké, and ornamented with pairs of paper butterflies, emblems of conjugal felicity. It may also be noted that on the cornice in which the *shoji* slide are depicted the *takara-mono*, or Precious Things (see p. 52); the table in the centre of the room has upon it a representation of the shore of Takasago, with the "pine of mutual old age," and figures of *Giotomba*, an old man and woman, who are the spirits of the pine; the pile of boxes on the left are supposed each to contain a thousand *rio*, the

* A Japanese never if he can avoid it sits without a mat (*tatami* or *goza*) beneath him. He even carries it out with him to picnics, etc.

dowry, and are called *senrio-bako*; the *shōji* are withdrawn so as to open up a view of the street; the artist has adopted a common device for getting over the difficulty of finishing off his ceiling and his foreground by the assistance of clouds.*

The *chigai-dana* is used as a receptacle for everything which we should put in a cupboard. As a rule it is fitted at the top with shelves, and below with a cupboard—the former for the reception of the *kakemono* which are not in use, *makemono* or rolls, lacquer boxes, etc., and the latter for stowing away the bedding.

Almost every house has a verandah, which is a necessity where heavy rain is frequent and the sides of the house are composed of fragile materials. Round this verandah, therefore, wooden screens called *amado* are placed at night and in the rainy season; these are fixed into grooves, and slide along.

No expensive paintwork, in feeble imitation of the wood it covers, stands ready to chip and scratch and look shabby. Everything remains as it left the carpenter's plane, usually smoothed but not polished. If the workman thought the bark upon the wood was pretty, he would probably leave even this, and he would certainly make no attempt to remove any artistic markings caused by the ravages of a worm or larvæ.† Our illustration (No. 68) shows a dinner party.

Besides the guest room, there was usually in olden times a special room set apart for the *Cha-no-Yu*, or tea ceremony; this was not always in the building, but often in one in the garden. I give from Mr. Frank's catalogue of the Ceramic Collection in the South Kensington Museum an account of this ancient ceremonial, for it has played an important part in the history of the nation, has had much to do with the course of political events, and still more with the rigid observance of rules of etiquette, etc.

Two modes of conducting the ceremonies were observed—

* For a full account of the marriage rite see Mitford's "Tales of Old Japan," p. 364.

† The Japanese even imitate these markings, and upon such incongruous subjects as sword sheaths, which I have seen pierced through and through to imitate a piece of wood eaten by worms.

the winter and summer modes. In the former the garden was strewn with fir leaves, the guests retained their shoes, and the furnace for the kettle was a pit in the floor filled with ashes.



No. 68.—A Dinner Party.

In the latter, the garden was decked with flowers, the guests took off their shoes, and a portable earthenware furnace (*furo*) was used.

The inside of the room was usually as plain as possible.

The hours fixed for the invitations were 4 to 6 A.M., noon, or 6 P.M. The guests, assembling in a pavilion (*machi-ai*) in the garden, announce their arrival by striking on a wooden tablet or bell, when the host himself or a servant appears to conduct them into the chamber. The entrance being only three feet square, the host kneels and lets the guests creep in before him. They being seated in a semicircle, the host goes to the door of the side room in which the utensils are kept, saying: "I am very glad you have come, and thank you much. I now go to make up the fire." He then brings in a basket (*sumi-tori*) containing charcoal in pieces of a prescribed length, a brush (*mitsu-ba*) made of three feathers, a pair of tongs (*hibashi*), the stand of the kettle (*kama-shiki*), iron handles for the kettle, a lacquer box* containing incense† (*kobako*), and some paper. He again leaves the chamber to bring in a vessel with ashes (*hai-ki*) and its spoon. He then makes up the fire and burns incense to overpower the smell of the charcoal. While he is thus occupied, the guests beg to be allowed to inspect the incense-box, generally an object of value, which passes from hand to hand, and the last guest returns it to the host.

This closes the first part of the ceremony, and both host and guests withdraw.

The second part commences with eating, and, as it is a rule that nothing should be left, the guests carry off, wrapped up in paper, any fragments that remain. The utensils used in this part of the ceremony are as follows:—

1. An iron kettle (*kama*) with a copper or iron lid, resting on a stand (*kama-shiki*).
2. A table or stand (*daisu*) of mulberry wood, two feet high.
3. Two tea-jars (*cha-iré*) (Illustration No. 69) containing the fine powdered tea, and enclosed in bags of brocade.
4. A vessel containing fresh water (*mizu-sachi*).
5. A tea-bowl of porcelain or earthenware (*cha-wan*, or, when

* This is used in the summer mode. In the winter a porcelain or earthenware box (*kogo*) is employed.

† In the winter odoriferous pastilles are burned, in the summer sandal-wood.

of large size, *temmoku*), simple in form, but remarkable for its antiquity or historical associations.

Besides these, there is a bamboo whisk (*cha-sen*); a silk cloth (*fukusa*), usually purple, for wiping the utensils; a spoon (*chasaku*), to take the tea out of the *cha-iré*; and a water-ladle (*shaku*).

After solemn salutations and obeisances the utensils are wiped and some of the powdered tea is placed in the tea bowl, hot water is poured on it, and the whole is vigorously stirred with the whisk until it looks like thin spinach; a boy then carries the bowl to the chief guest, from whom it passes round the party to the last, who returns it empty to the boy. The empty bowl is then passed round once more that the guests may admire it. The utensils are then washed by the host, and the ceremony is at an end.

The ceremonial described above is that known as the "Koicha," and Dr. Funk states that he was present on one of these occasions, when the tea-bowl and water-jar were exhibited with much pride as old Korean; the host dilated on the age and origin of the various utensils, and mentioned, for instance, that the bag of one of the tea-jars was made from the dress of the celebrated dancer Kogaru, who lived in the time of Taiko-Sama (Hidéyoshi).

These ceremonies were the cause of the large prices occasionally paid for the vessels of pottery used in them; hence we hear that, in the time of Hidéyoshi, a single tea-bowl of Séto ware was sold for some thousand yen.* Good specimens may be met with occasionally in England at about 25s. each. Care should be taken to obtain the old bag and box.

From these ceremonies it may be judged by what strict self-imposed rules of etiquette the Japanese have been governed, and how conservative they have been regarding them. The *cha-no-yu* had its origin, according to Mr. Chamberlain, seven hundred years ago, during which time it has

* A yen is about a dollar, now under 3s. The moneys are as follows:—

10 rin = 1 sen, rather less than $\frac{1}{2}$ d.
100 sen = 1 yen.

passed through three transformations, a medico-religious, a luxurious, and an æsthetic stage. The second of these was in full swing in 1330, and consisted of a ritual so full of extravagances that vast fortunes were dissipated in its service. It was under the sway of Hideyoshi in 1594 that a code of rules was formulated for its observance, against which there was no appeal; it inculcated morality, good-fellowship, politeness, social equality, simplicity, and the worship of the antique in objects of Art. "The members of the association were," as Mr. Anderson says, "the critics and connoisseurs, whose dicta consecrated or condemned the labours of artist or author, and established canons of taste, to which all works, to be successful in their generation, must conform." The *séances* constituted symposia in which abstruse questions of philosophy, literature, and art were discussed from the standpoint of acknowledged authority.



No. 69.—*Sêto Cha-iré. Sixteenth Century.*

Persons in Japan who wish to start housekeeping are saved one great expense, namely, furnishing. No carpets, tables, bedsteads, wardrobes, or cupboards find a place in their requirements. Nor does the Japanese need chairs, for he is only comfortable when resting on his knees and heels on a cushion (*zabuton*); and he must have his *hibachi*, or fire vessel, and his *tobako-bon*, or tobacco-tray. The *hibachi* is a portable fireplace, which throws out a slight heat, and also

serves as a source whence to light his pipe. It contains small pieces of charcoal. According to the exhaustive work of Professor Morse on "Japanese Homes," whenever a caller comes, the first act of hospitality, whether in winter or summer, is to place the hibachi before him. Even in shops it is



No. 70.—*Tobako-bon. Eighteenth Century. (Ahrens Collection.)*

brought in and placed on a mat when the visitor enters. At a winter party one is assigned to each guest, and the place where each is to sit is indicated by a square cloth cushion. Our illustration of the tobako-bon is from a beautiful specimen in natural wood, inlaid with irises in tortoise-shell,

mother-of-pearl, and ivory; the mountings are in repoussé silver; it is eighteenth-century work, of the school of Yō-yu-sai. In common with the other pieces of household furniture given here, it is of superior workmanship, and similar objects would only be found in the houses of the very well-to-do. The tobako-bon is also handed to a visitor; it contains a small earthen jar for holding charcoal. The baskets used for holding the charcoal for the hibachi and tobako-bon are often very artistically made. The only other articles of furniture will be the kotatsu, a square wooden frame, which in winter is placed over the hibachi or stove, and is covered with a large wadded quilt or *futon* (under this the whole family huddle for warmth), the pillow (*makura*), and the lantern (*andon*) which feebly illumines the apartment. No Japanese would think of sleeping without having this burning throughout the night.

All houses were until lately lit at night by lanterns, but now paraffin lamps are driving them out and assisting to increase the fires. Owing to the frequent visitation of fire, to which Japanese towns and villages are subject, almost every house of any importance possesses a kura, or godown, a fireproof isolated building, in which all the valuables are kept.

The consumption of lanterns in Japan is enormous, without counting the export trade. Every house has dozens for internal use and for going out at night. These latter are placed in a rack in the hall; each bears the owner's name in Chinese characters, or his crest in red or black on a white ground. One burns outside most houses and shops, and every foot-passenger carries one. No festival is complete without thousands of them.

Smoking is an universal habit. It begins, interrupts, and ends the day. The pipes used are very small in the bowl, and only hold sufficient tobacco for three or four whiffs; these are swallowed and expelled through the nostrils. In consequence of their tiny capacity they are often taken for opium pipes, the smoking of which is forbidden. Upon them and the tobacco-pouch artists bestow much skill.

Many, perhaps the majority, of the objects which come to Europe are utensils for food; it may, therefore, be interesting to describe a meal in a well-to-do house. Herr Rein says that each person is served separately on a small table or tray. For his solid food he uses chop-sticks, but his soup he drinks from a small lacquered bowl. Upon his table will be found a



No. 71.—*Mizu-sashi*. (Collection of Sir Charles Dilke, Bart.)

small porcelain bowl of rice, and dishes upon which are relishes of fish, etc.; a teapot, for the contents of which a saucer instead of a cup is used. The stimulants will be either tea (*cha*) or rice beer (*saké*). The tea is native green, and no milk or sugar is used; it is drunk on every possible occasion, and is even served when one visits a shop. The tea apparatus (*chá-dôgu*) is always in readiness in the living-room, viz., a

brazier with live coals (*hibachi*), tray (*bon*), tea-pot (*dobin* or *chá-bin*), cups (*cha-wan*), and a tea-caddy (*cha-iré*). So too a labourer going to work carries with him a bento of lacquered wood for his rice, a kettle, a tea-caddy, a tea-pot, a cup, and chop-stick (*hashi*) (Junker's "Tea Customs in Japan"). The *saké* contains a certain amount of fusel oil, and is intoxicating;

it is usually drunk warm from saké cups, which may be either of lacquer or porcelain. Rice being the principal condiment, a servant kneels near by with a large panful, and replenishes the bowls as they are held out to her; it is eaten at almost every meal, the only substitute being groats made out of millet, barley, or wheat. Bread is seldom used. Other favourite edibles are gigantic radishes (*daikon*), which frequently figure in Art, lotus roots, young bamboo shoots, cucumbers, of which a single person will often consume three or four a day;* so, too, the dark violet fruit of the egg plant, and fungi (the subject of frequent illustration) are eaten at almost every meal. With fruits the Japanese is sparsely supplied; his grapes, peaches, pears, and walnuts will not compare with Western specimens, but the persimmon, with which the ape is always associated, and which is always cropping up in fairy stories, a brilliant orange-coloured fruit, the size of an apple, is common enough; the tree grows to a large size, and holds its fruit in the autumn even after it has lost its leaves.

The wife eats separately from her husband, in another room with the rest of the females, and holds a position little higher than that of an upper servant.

No notice of the contents of a Japanese house would be complete without some reference to the incense-burners (*ko-ro*) which find a place there, and also in the Buddhist temples. These afforded employment for a large number of artists in bronze. In the example illustrated, the incense issues from perforations in lids placed in the backs of the cranes.

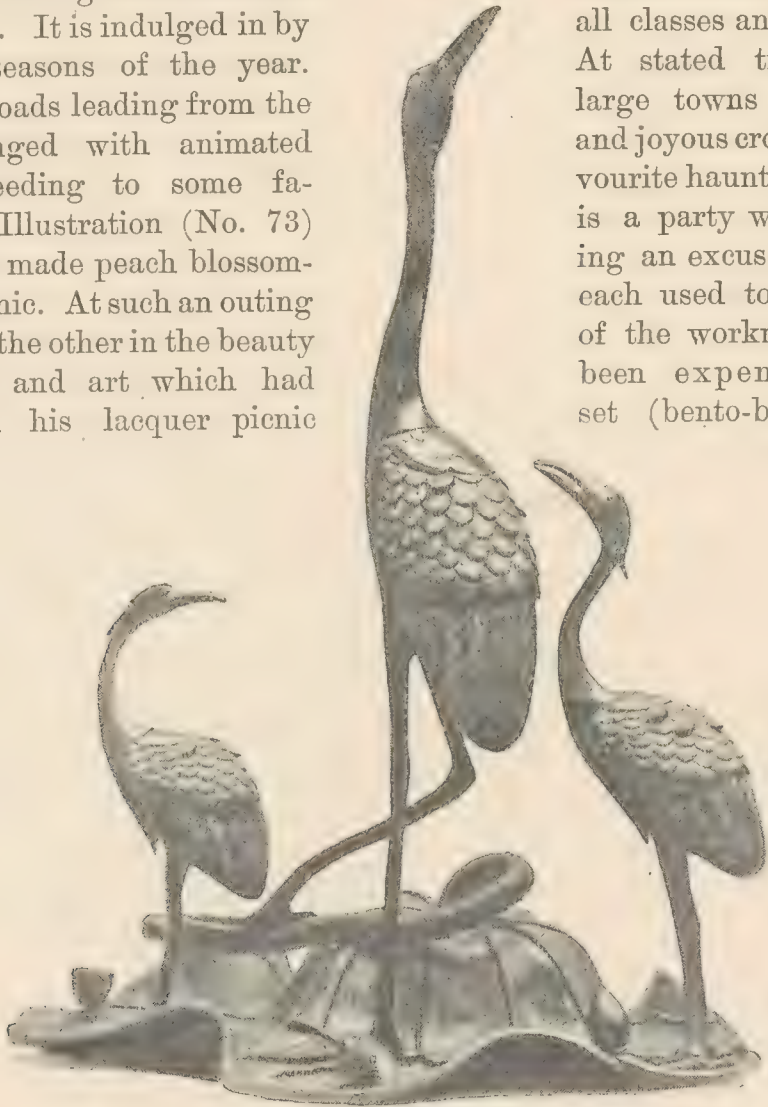
An article which finds a place in most houses and in all shops and is constantly depicted in Art, is the soroban, a frame enclosing rows of balls moving on wires by which accounts and calculations are made. Other articles frequently drawn are besoms and rakes. In this respect the Japanese is singularly clean, as every evening there is a universal sweeping up of the fronts of the houses. Hokusai is very

* From these and from gourds are made the hour-glass shaped saké bottles, which so often find a place in pictures.

fond of drawing persons sweeping, especially falling leaves. The old couple, Giotomba (see page 96), always have a broom and rake of antique shape.

Picnicing is a favourite ment. It is indulged in by all seasons of the year. the roads leading from the thronged with animated proceeding to some fa- the Illustration (No. 73) have made peach blossom- a picnic. At such an outing with the other in the beauty ship and art which had upon his lacquer picnic

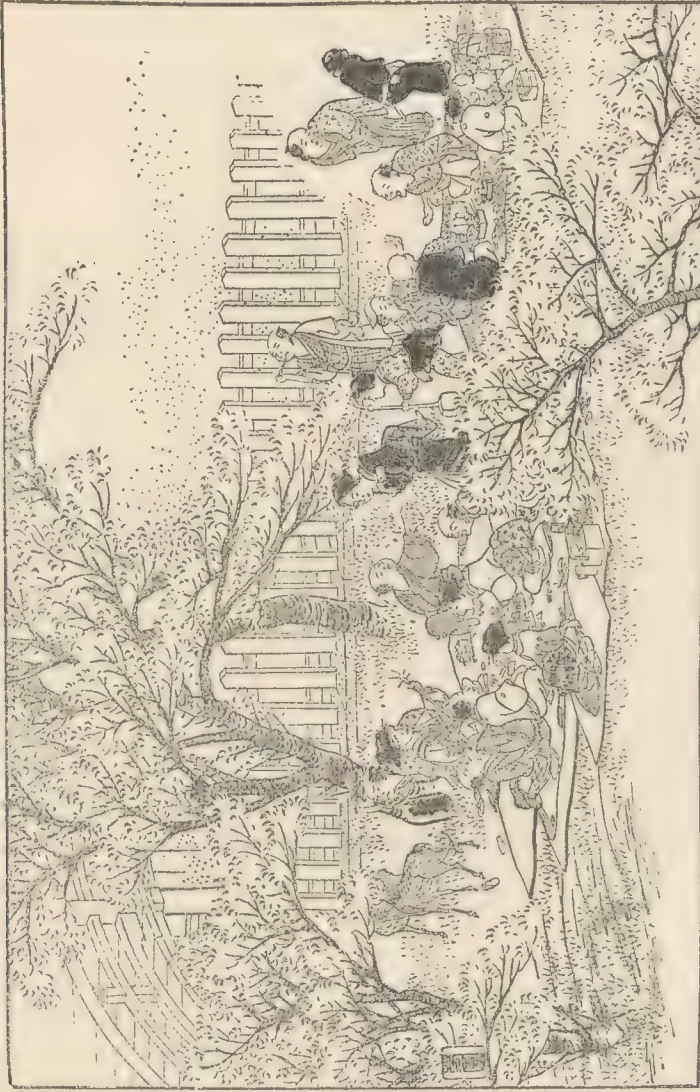
outdoor amuse- all classes and at At stated times large towns are and joyous crowds vourite haunt. In is a party which ing an excuse for each used to vie of the workman- been expended set (bento-bako)



No. 72.—*Ko-ro.* (*W. J. Stuart's Collection.*)

or his saké jar. At the Burty sale one of these sets sold for nearly £500. An illustration is given of one belonging to Mr. Wm. C. Alexander (see page 108). It is by Shiomi Masanori, a renowned maker of the eighteenth century. One can hardly

credit it, but Doctor Dresser asserts that these precious things are carried by the owner on a hedge stake slung over his shoulder. This is hardly reconcilable with the custom of encasing them in silken handkerchiefs and wadded boxes,



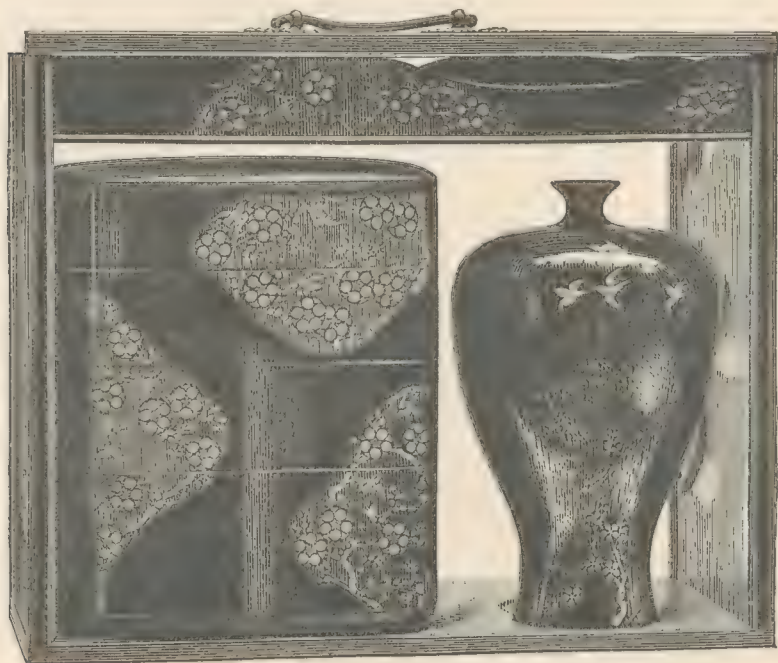
No. 73.—Picnicing.

which in themselves are often of coeval date with the object they enclose. To these entertainments mats for sitting on, low screens for flirting* behind, tobako-bons, and other

* Flirtation is practised by a wave of the right-hand palm downwards, or by waving the right sleeve. Kissing is unknown, as is shaking hands.

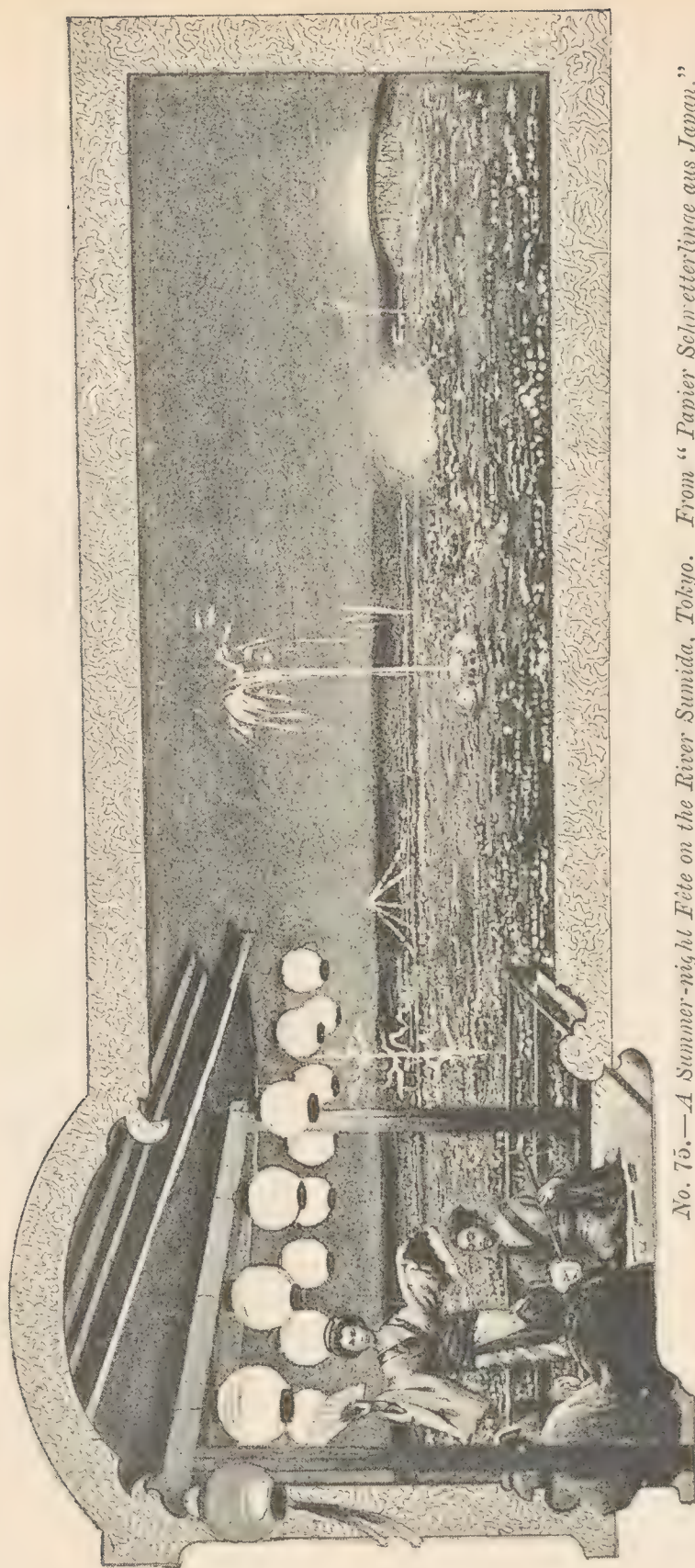
objects are also carried. The ladies bring their musical instruments, and songs are sung and poetry improvised.

The excuses for picnicing are many and various. For instance: upon a certain day in January all the world sallies forth to gather seven different kinds of grasses, which, upon the return home, are made into a salad, and nowadays we read of excursions by railway to view the cherry-trees at Koganei, and seven thousand lovers of nature travelling from Tokyo in a day to that historical spot.



No. 74.—*Bento-bako*. Eighteenth Century. (*Alexander Collection*.)

The Japanese, too, is very fond of spending his time at the tea-house, a sort of restaurant of which there is one or more in every town. They are situated whenever practicable on the most picturesque spots, and many with their gardens, etc., are famed for their views, notably those in the neighbourhood of Lake Biwa. These find a place over and over again in illustrations. Geishas are an invariable accompaniment of the saké which is consumed and which they serve. They dance, sing, play the koto and samisen, and are not



No. 75.—A Summer-night Fête on the River Sumida, Tokyo. From "Papier Schmetterlinge aus Japan."

remarkable for excessive prudery. In the Illustration No. 75 two may be seen.

Every one is fond of pets, whether in the shape of birds, dogs, cats, ducks, or chickens.

For a graphic and amusing account of Japanese society at the present time I would refer the reader to "A Social Departure." Loti's "Madame Chrysanthème" gives a thoroughly French version of a lower strata of the same.



CHAPTER IX.

FLORA AND FLOWER FESTIVALS.

“ When winter turns to spring,
Birds that were songless make their songs resound,
Flowers that were flowerless cover all the ground ;
Yet 'tis no perfect thing :—
I cannot walk, so tangled is each hill ;
So thick the herbs, I cannot pluck my fill.
But in the autumn tide
I cull the scarlet leaves and love them dear,
And bid the green leaves stay, with many a tear,
All on the fair hill-side :—
No time so sweet as that. Away ! away !
Autumn's the time I fain would keep away.”

OHOGIMI, *Seventh Century.*

If there is one characteristic which marks taste and refinement in a people it is a love for nature and the beauties which adorn it. In European nations this culture has advanced *pari passu* with civilisation, but only within the last century has it really permeated downwards and filtered through all classes. So now, if one touch of the love of nature makes the whole world kin, then indeed must we join hands with Eastern nations.

The poets and painters of China and Japan enjoyed nature long before ours thought of it, as the lines at the head of this chapter show. Here, too, is a translation from a very ancient poem : *

“ Should the mountain cherry cease,
In the spring-time of the year,

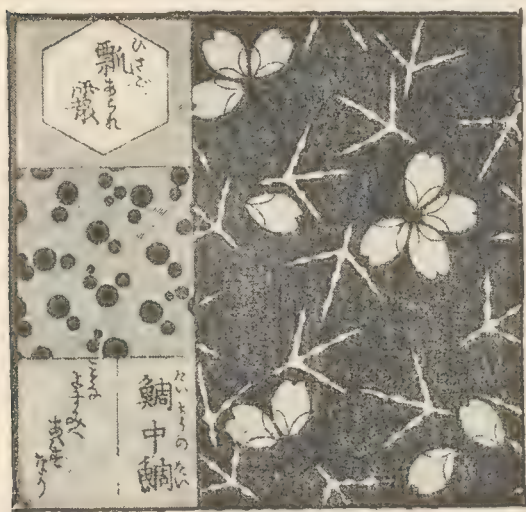
* Japanese poems usually consist of little verselets of thirty-one syllables, arranged in lines thus—5, 7, 5, 7, 7.

With its mass of new-born bloom,
 Us poor mortal men to cheer,
 Then would heart of spring be doomed
 And its brightness fade away."

In the British Museum may be seen pictures dating from the eleventh century in which the herbage and rock are drawn so correctly that their species and kind can be identified.

In the "Genji Monogatari," a romance written in the tenth century* (to which we have already referred, p. 71), we often find the hero, Prince Genji, in ecstasies over the landscape. For instance, as his gaze over the trees falls on the far-off

capital, enveloped in haze as dusk sets in, "What a lovely landscape!" said he. The people to whom such scenery is familiar are perhaps happy and contented." "Nay," replied the attendants; "but were you to see the beautiful mountain ranges and the sea coast the picture would indeed be found lovely." During his exile "he



No. 76.—Design, Cherry Flower and Birds' Feet. From "Dresser's Japan."

ful landscape in the neighbourhood."

Although Japan originally received its education in landscape Art and love for the picturesque in nature from the Chinese, and these were fostered by the teachings of the Buddhist religion, they have undoubtedly been for ages innate in the nation. Chinese influence has in reality been a restraining element, which compelled the Japanese artist to look at nature in a false way, and depict its forms in a manner entirely inconsistent with its aspect as presented to him. Nay more, fashion and the rules of the school in which he worked

*Translated by Suyematz Kenchio (Trübner).



No. 77.—Tropical Vegetation and Rain. By Hokusai.

compelled him for centuries to turn his back on nature and create a world of frowning rocks and Chinese pagodas which was entirely unlike anything Japanese. These rules, until within the last hundred years, prevented his taking up a flower, a bamboo shoot, or a bird, and copying it; he was obliged to draw it in a certain manner laid down for him in ages long past, and embodied in manuals whose authority he dare not question. Those who watched the very second-rate artists in the London Japanese village may remember the manner in which they drew—a manner which was identical with that of the whole school. Their paper was divided up into squares which they had to fill in regular rotation, and their design was elaborated either out of a copybook or by memory.

It must never be forgotten that the educated Japanese esteems a fine specimen of calligraphy far more than a good painting. A single word written by a good calligraphist will exceed in value a painting by an artist of equal fame.* It is on this account that on metal-work, lacquer, and porcelain we find so many imitations of brush-work. In looking through a collection of metal-work, an intelligent Japanese usually prefers incised to relief work, and very often the signature at the back to the work on the front. It is quite curious to notice his enthusiasm over a finely engraved signature.

Hence one can understand that in a large proportion of cases fidelity to nature would be of small account as compared with technical skill in handling. We see an instance of this in the criticism of Shu-zan (translated "*Pictorial Arts of Japan*" p. 186), who wrote in 1777, shortly after a section of the artists had begun to look at nature: "Amongst pictures is a kind called naturalistic, in which it is considered proper that flowers, grasses, fishes, insects, &c., should bear exact resemblance to nature. This is a special style and must not be depreciated, but as its object is merely to show the form, neglecting the rules of Art, it is commonplace and without taste. In ancient pictures the study of the art of outline and of the laws of taste were respected without attention to close

* There are two styles of writing, the "*Katakana*" and the "*Hiragana*."

imitation to form." On the other hand, in the "Genji Monogatari" there is a long and enthusiastic eulogy upon pictures which are taken direct from nature.

But if the artist is still not allowed to study nature to the extent he might, that pursuit is undertaken by a large section of the nation. Prominent amongst these are the botanists and herbalists, who for centuries have been noted for their knowledge of the floral and vegetable kingdom, and who enjoy, in common with the Chinese, the distinction of having the most elaborate and oldest vegetable nomenclature in the world. This is hardly to be wondered at, for their country is the most interesting one in that respect outside the tropics.

Captious critics insist that even now the Japanese do not draw trees and flowers accurately. Even one so generous as Mr. Anderson considers that their representation is distinguished by graceful composition and harmonious colouring rather than by botanical correctness. To the ordinary admirer of Japanese Art this will indeed come as a surprise; he, like myself, will probably rest quite satisfied with the repast which has been spread before him, and will refuse to let his enjoyment be lessened because each petal does not always conform in drawing to accurately defined rules of perspective or is not relieved from its fellow by perfect chiaroscuro.

Flowers are associated with every act of a Japanese's life: they herald his birth, they are his daily companions, they accompany him to the grave; and after that they serve as a link between him and those he has left, for his relatives and friends do not rest satisfied with piling up his coffin with floral tributes, they show their remembrance by offerings for long years afterwards.

A touching instance was noted the other day in a Japanese newspaper of the poetical sentiments with regard to nature which apparently permeate all classes. A young girl, a *joro*, committed suicide because her position was unbearable. She left a letter to the owners of the house where she had been a slave, in which occurred this sentence: "*From under the shadow of the grasses I will send my gratitude to you.*"

No home, however humble, is complete without its vase of



No. 78.—Bon-ichi, or Market Day. From the Toto Saijiki.

flowers:* in the wealthier ones the vase is of porcelain or metal, in the cottage it is often merely a bamboo shoot. The flower markets are thronged by all classes, and hawkers parade the streets with them. The altars, too, of the temples are almost invariably adorned with flowers.

The arrangement of flowers has its literature and professors, who have laid down regular codes, which extend even to the composition of bouquets, the number of flowers, the proportion of leaf to flowers, and the contrast of colours between the flowers and the receptacle in which they are placed. Mr. Anderson states that four centuries ago the greatest artist of the age did not consider it derogatory to furnish designs for the guidance of ladies in the practice of this offshoot of decorative art, which like many other Japanese customs, is of Chinese origin. Specimens of bouquets from which our florists might gather hints are to be found in many Japanese handbooks, and a very extensive illustrated treatise on the subject has recently been written by Mr. Conder.

The gardens attached to almost every house are illustrations of the motto, *multum in parvo*. As a rule, these are not for use, but for ornament, and are laid out with the utmost care and precision. The landscape artist need not travel beyond his garden for much of the material with which he illustrates his work. Dwarfed pine groves, tiny bamboos, a miniature rice-field and meadow, each no bigger than a chess-board, a pebbled stream, a lakelet stocked with carp, gold fish and tortoises, lotus flowers, iris and flowering reeds; even a puny bridge, waterfall, and tiny mountains a few feet high, are present. Rocks are considered a *sine quâ non*, and as an instance of this it may be mentioned that at Tokyô, where no suitable material can be found, they are transported from a distance of fifty miles; there are regular dealers in rocks, and rare shapes and colours cost £20 apiece. Books too are written which treat of the proper positions in the garden which should be assigned to them. Professor Morse, in "Japanese Homes," says that legends are frequently carved

* "Unlike its population, the country never lets itself be seen naked!"
—Sir R. Alcock.

upon them, as for instance: "The sight of the plum bloom causes the ink to flow in the writing-room." Stone lanterns (*ishi-dōrō*) are to be found in every garden, and abound in picture-books; larger ones resemble pagodas, smaller ones mushrooms. They also line the approaches to the temples, to which they have been presented as votive offerings (see Illustration No. 26). Every garden which is large enough has a rustic summer-house, over which vines are trained; it is placed, whenever feasible, where a good view can be obtained. A Japanese will take all his garden away with him if he changes his dwelling. Reference has already been made to the fondness of the Japanese for the picturesque in nature; in olden times almost every nobleman's house had its "Chamber of the Inspiring View," whence the best view could be obtained, and the rooms, and even the houses, were named after flowers, as the "Kiri," "Wisteria," the "Villa of Falling Flowers,"* a practice which still exists; the banks of Lake Biwa were studded with arbours or booths, and thither poets and authors retired to compose the classics of the country. The porcelain garden seats which are imported here in such numbers were originally designed for use in these arbours. The importance attached to gardens may be estimated by the volumes which have been written about them. One of the most notable is Shunchosai's *Miako Riusen Meisho* where the gardens of Kyoto are illustrated in six volumes.

No notice of this subject would be complete without some mention of the dwarfed trees, upon which horticultural sorcery has been carried to its extreme limits. Professor Morse mentions seeing a blackened, distorted, and apparently dead stick, which quickly sent out long, delicate, drooping twigs soon to be covered with a wealth of beautiful rosy plum blossoms; also a pine tree not two feet in height, and with a flattened top twenty feet in circumference. Siebold, in 1826, saw a fullgrown oak which could be covered with the hand, lime-trees in full bloom, yet not more than three inches high,

* So, too, the names of women, as the Princess-Blossoming-Brilliantly-Like-The-Flowers-of-the-Trees.

and bamboos and pines of even smaller size. Then, on the other hand, the gardener prides himself on the enormous dimensions to which he can increase his flowers by careful selection, the variegation he can effect in their leaves and petals, and the freaks of nature he can bring about. These are the result of long-continued hereditary skill, for this occupation always passes from father to son. Our illustration No. 79 shows a gentleman (distinguishable by his sword), pruning a pine-tree. The Illustration No. 80 is from a volume which



No. 79.—*Pruning the Pine-tree. From Banreki.*

treats of nothing but miniature gardens, each of which represents a different view on the Tō-kai-dō Road (see p. 17).

The reader will by this time be quite prepared for the information that Japan is perhaps more notable for its flora than for anything else. Mr. Chamberlain, in his "Things Japanese," says that it must excite the imagination of the man of science as much as ever Japanese works of Art excite the man of taste. The number of known species of trees and plants (exclusive of mosses and low organisms) totals the enormous figure

of 2,743, whilst further investigations must raise that number considerably.

The varied and exceptional climatic conditions of Japan



No. 80.—*Miniature Garden representing one of the Tokaido Hara, or posting places on the great road.*

naturally affect its flora very considerably. Consequently we find in Art, often in the same picture, almost incomprehensible incongruities; as, for instance, the palm and the bamboo side

by side with the pine-tree and the oak of northern regions; and the same thing is noticeable in the animal kingdom, as, for instance, the bear and the ape. This is no exaggeration, for in short distances one can pass from almost tropical growths at the sea-level to alpine vegetation round the snow limits. I noted in my first chapter that Japan has been described as a veritable country of flowers, and that in hedge, and orchard, and garden they abounded. I may here add Herr Rein's testimony to what it is like beyond the limits of cultivation. "Before reaching the woodland," he says, "lies a sort of prairie; this is usually a living mosaic of flowers, and is called by the Japanese 'the great flower field.'" Here may be recognised many an English wild flower, oddly associated with many of our garden adornments and numerous complete strangers; for instance, violets, milkwort, pimpernel, blue scabious, bluebells, common bright-eye, bugle, sorrell, hart's tongue, toad flax, osmunda, orchids—mingled with these will be lilies of varied descriptions, with great white, blue, and yellow flowers, the pyrus Japonica, azaleas, deutzias, wild roses, and lilies of the valley."

The forests which cover vast tracts of the mountainous parts of the country are not less remarkable for their wealth of floral beauty, and this not only from the different species of trees but from the growth of climbing plants which cover them and the ground. Any one who will take the trouble to look at the labels which in our Kensington Gardens are attached to most of the flowering trees will remark how many have been imported from Japan. Rein states that, "early in June nearly a hundred kinds of tree and seventy shrubs may be found in flower on many of the mountain slopes."

Deciduous trees are quite exceptions, and this must be borne in mind when considering representations of winter landscape.

Any one who has studied the artist's delineations of Japanese trees must have noticed his apparent fondness for girdling them with creepers, and how he revels in the portrayal of their elegant curves and flowing lines; especially is this noticeable in metal-work, where various coloured metals and

pliable wire-work afford scope for their successful rendering. An especial favourite is the hydrangea, which attains to a height of from twenty to thirty feet and in summer is covered with white flowers. The wisteria (*Fuji*) with its flowers is also found on lacquer, ivory, and metal-work; it is as common as our bramble, and the sprays of its flowers often exceed three feet in length, whilst a hundred persons may rest under its shadow, and its stem grows to the thickness of a man's body; its branches are used as cables. Its coming in with spring typifies youth. Its leaves have recently been used with success for making fine paper.

The bamboo (*také*), from its lending itself so readily to dexterous treatment with the brush, is a prime favourite. As a tender shoot with its feathered head, as a tall green, polished, full-grown tree, as a shrivelled, frost-bitten reed, it is repeated again and again. Nothing so readily assists the artist to give a hint as to the state of the weather: it droops in the hot air, it flutters with the zephyr, it bends under the breeze, it bows its thousand pennons beneath the typhoon. It is the abiding place of animals, birds, and butterflies, and even the tiger is supposed to hide in its brakes from his enemies; it is associated with the sparrow, because both are of a gentle and timid nature; it typifies uprightness and usefulness, and is emblematical of long life; it attains to an age numbered by hundreds of years.

Then, again, it is a necessity to the Japanese's existence. It is used for everything—houses, hedges, bridges, boats, carriages, conduits, vases, mats, baskets, fans, umbrellas, pipe-cases, tobacco jars; in fact, every article of household use and ornament. As to this, see Mr. Holmes's paper in the "Transactions of the Japan Society," vol. i., and his collection of bamboo articles now at Kew.

The willow (*shiguré*) is a favourite with artists, and is the subject of many legends: it is found in conjunction with the swallow, owing to both having a wavy and swaying motion.

The pine (*matsu*) is met with in great quantities over the whole of Japan; it is not, therefore, to be wondered at that it constantly recurs in its landscape; but it is also introduced on

account of its typifying prosperity; longevity when in conjunction with the tortoise, crane, and bamboo, and ripe old age when accompanied by snow. Fukusas, on which it is embroidered in company with the crane, are for presentation to the newly born.

The Hinoki, a conifer (*Chamaccyparis obtusa*), is used most extensively as the foundation upon which lacquer is laid.

The blossom of the plum (*prunus*, Jap. *umé*) is one of the greatest favourites with the Japanese, for it appears at the close of winter and foretells spring. Hence poets sing its praises, and the artist delights in it, for it assures him that sketching time is at hand.



No. 81.—*Prunus Blossom.* From a *Kodzuka*.

“Ice-flakes are falling fast
Through the chilly air, and now
Yonder trees with snow-bloom laden
Do assume the wild plum’s guise,
With their mass of snowy flowers
Gladdening winter’s dreary time.”

The blossoms appear in March before the leaves (see Illustration No. 81) and are often depicted laden with snow. Umé-také-matsu—the plum blossom, bamboo, and pine—fragrant, green, and everlasting, are the emblems of longevity. The plum blossom is often drawn athwart the moon; this is symbolic, but of what I do not know; it is also associated with the nightingale. Siebold mentions that it has been cultivated to yield flowers of every shade from white to red, and even yellow and green, and, of course, single and double. Its scent is delicious; the most famous orchards in Japan are at Tsuki-ga-se, in Yamato.

The Japanese cherry-tree (*Sakura*), according to botanists, is falsely so called; they term it *Prunus pseudo-cerasus*. Its

fruit is very indifferent, but as it is almost entirely cultivated for its flower this does not matter. It is preferred by the Japanese to the plum, because it is a true native of Japan, not an importation from China, as is the plum. Both it and the plum-tree grow wild, and excursions take place (see Illustration No. 84) in the spring* to the mountains to see it in its beauty, when, as the old poet sings :

“The dark massed shades are flecked
By the mountain cherry’s bloom.”

And the poet Motsori says:—“If one should inquire of you concerning the spirit of a true Japanese, point to the wild cherry-blossom shining in the sun.” It also grows single and double. In the “Chiushingura” we read of one Rikiya bringing a basketful of rare eight and nine-fold wild cherry-blossoms to cheer his lord.



No. 82.-Cherry Blossom. From a Kodzuka.

The peach-tree (*momo*) is used in Art much seldomer than either of the foregoing, although it is emblematic of longevity, is a great favourite in China, and grows everywhere in magnificence. One would have imagined, seeing that such endless streams of “hawthorn” china came from the middle kingdom, that this tree was especially favoured by artists. But the truth is that the European† does not take the trouble to discriminate between the varieties of flower. So-called “hawthorn” is plum blossom, and the design upon the jars is said to be derived from a pattern made by blossoms fallen upon the ice. For the assistance of my readers I give an illustrations of the flowers of the

* In Tōkyō it is at its finest about the 10th April. The most famous spots for this cherry are Yoshino in Yamato, and Arashi-yama near Kyōto.

† The American terms it incorrectly “peach bloom.”

prunus and cherry, by which it will be seen that the petals of the latter are indented at their tops.



No. 83.—A Chrysanthemum Show.

The peach-tree is often coupled with oxen. There is a Chinese saying, "Turn the horse on the flower-covered mountain, and the ox into the peach orchard."

The large white blossom of the wild mulberry is also noticeable; but to give a complete list of the flowers which find a place on Japanese wares would require a volume. One can only touch upon those which oftenest occur, either portrayed in their natural form or conventionalised into ornament; it is some knowledge of this latter department that foreign designers should endeavour to attain to, for at present, in their ignorance, they seize hold of a conventionalised flower, and they alter and adapt it until it loses individuality, beauty, and meaning. There is hardly an English wall-paper or stuff now designed in which one cannot trace ignorant attempts at improving Japanese floral designs.

The flower of flowers in Japan is the *kiku* or chrysanthemum.* Being the imperial crest, it has, of late years especially, found its way into the decoration of almost every species of article. This, no doubt, has arisen from the wily Japanese finding that the foreigner is easily gulled into accepting as a piece from the Mikado's palace any ware which bears his badge. It now figures on official uniforms in the same way as our crown does. A chrysanthemum show, which, it will be seen, differs little from one in our Temple Gardens, save for the folk who visit it, will be found illustrated on the previous page. The flower has long been a favourite; in the "*Genji Monogatari*" we read that "the chrysanthemums in the gardens were in full bloom, whose sweet perfume soothed us with its gentle influence; around us the scarlet leaves of the maple were falling. It was altogether romantic."

The peony (*botan*) perhaps comes next in the floral kingdom to the *prunus* in the frequency of its delineation. The Japanese cultivate it until its flowers attain to an enormous size, and it is easy to understand its attraction to the artist by its gorgeous colour and massive structure, and in its lending itself admirably to bold designs, whether in the flat or in relief.

* See page 33 for an illustration of the conventionalised chrysanthemum and the other Imperial badge, the *Paulownia imperialis*. This is the flower of a tree, and is similar to our purple foxglove in form, size, and colour. It has been introduced into England; two large specimens of it are in my garden in the Isle of Wight.

The double kind is that which is most frequently employed, but it has none of the cabbagey appearance which its relations in this country assume.

The iris (*negi* or *kosai*) is another popular favourite, and we find its delicate-coloured flowers on stuffs, lacquer, inlaid ivories, and in mother-of-pearl (see *tobako-bon*, page 102). The metal-worker too twists its graceful leaves into delightful patterns for his pierced sword guards. The iris, with its brother the lily, is very common throughout the country, growing almost without cultivation.

The tea-plant is one of the most ornamental of Japanese shrubs, as it is allowed to grow to a good size. It is a camellia, and has creamy white scented blossoms. The camellia itself is, curiously enough, not a favourite, because its flowers drop off whole, an unlucky reminder of "Heads off."

The lotus flower (*hachisu-bana*) is the Buddhist emblem of purity; for it grows unsullied out of the mud. Upon it the fortunate entrant to Paradise is seated; it therefore forms the resting-place of Buddha. Its leaves are usually gemmed with dew-drops, and this effect the artist seizes upon at once, whenever he finds it; for their insertion, or that of sparkling rain-drops, will not only afford to whoever looks at his work a clue to the state of the weather when it was done, but its portrayal is a difficulty which he delights in overcoming; this is especially so if he is a metal-worker, for he will then have to drive a tiny hole into his metal, make a minute silver globule, and fix it firmly, for every dew-drop he wishes to represent—

"Oh! Lotus-leaf, I dreamt that the whole earth
Held nought more pure than thee,—held nought more true:
Why, then, when on thee rolls a drop of dew
Pretend that 'tis a gem of priceless worth?"

HEUZEN, A.D. 835—856.

The lotus is an article of food as it was in Homer's days.

"Whoso has tasted the honey sweet fruit from the stem of the lotus
Never once wishes to leave it, and never once seeks to go homeward:
There could he stay, if he could, content, with the eaters of lotus,
Plucking and eating the lotus, forgetting that he was returning."

Odyssey trans. : SIR E. ARNOLD.

Pinks have long been favourites. Wild ones, noticeable for their beauty, grow profusely round Yokohama. A bouquet of



No. 84.—*Hanami, or Cherry Viewing* * *From the Toto Saijiki.*

* The Japanese are especially fond of any flower which they have to look up to.

the *Nadeshiko*, or "little darling," is presented by the Genji prince to his lady-love, and in the poetical strain which it was the fashion then and for long after to adopt, he says, speaking of it by another name (Tokonatsu, or "everlasting summer") :—

"When with composed gaze we view
The mingled flowers in gay parterre,
Amid the bloom of radiant hue,
The Tokonatsu, my love, is there."

Another flower which attracts the Genji's admiration is the Yugao (or evening glory), whose "white blossoms one after another disclose their smiling lips in unconscious beauty." Of these his lady-love writes—

"The crystal dew, at evening's hour,
Sleeps on the Yugao's beauteous flower."

The lespedeza (*Hagi*) has attached to it several fables, chief amongst them being that in which it is represented as a maid beloved by a stag.

The melon or gourd (*Hiotan*) is often seen, especially upon metal-work representations of houses, trailing its stem over the sides and roof. It was the emblem of Taikosama, his first banner being a bundle of gourds. It grows to enormous size, one recently exhibited being 3½ feet long and 5 feet in circumference.

It will be noticed that the fronts and entrances to the Japanese houses are frequently represented as decorated with flowers, branches of trees, etc. These decorations are set up at various periods of the year upon the occasion of different festivals. Of these the principal is that on New Year's Day. The decorations then consist of the bending bamboo and the stubborn fir, representing long and vigorous life, and the red and black stemmed pine, typical of man and womanhood and of a felicitous union. A rope of straw suspended between them stops the entry of evilly disposed persons or demons; so does a piece of charcoal hung from it. Other ornamentations upon the rope are a boiled grasshopper crab, typifying old age; yudzurika boughs, upon which new leaves sprout before the old ones fall, indicative of successive generations of chil-

dren; and the red berries of the nandina shrub. Upon the bamboo are hung small oranges.

Flower festivals are peculiarly Japanese. They commence in February with the plum, followed in March with the peach, and in April with the cherry. At the last named all the roads are crowded with folk proceeding in their holiday attire to certain well-known spots, such as Uyenô, which are famous for their wealth of bloom. Every one is in high spirits, for the winter of discontent is over, and the cherry, the sign thereof and the pride of all the flowering trees, is arrayed in all its beauty. This festival lasts for weeks, and certain villages have all the aspect of a fair, for the cherry-viewing is an excuse for picnicking, at which it is the correct thing to indulge in cherry-water. Already, however, complaints are ripe that modern progress is spoiling this. Special trains are run; and the hanami which used formerly to be indulged in at a trifling cost, now runs away with plenty of money. Twenty dollars is now asked for a good room through which the wind can blow the snowflakes of the cherry bloom. In May comes the wisteria festa at Kamédo, where groves of this tree, covered with blossom, surround a small lake. Then the Japanese has more picnicking and, being poetically inclined, covers the wisteria branches with verses written on slips of paper and composed in praise of its beauty. In June and July come the iris, the calamus, the peony, and the lotus; in August and September the hibisci; in October the chrysanthemum and the maple (*Momiji*). These festivals are delightfully illustrated in the "Tôto Saijiki or Holiday Festivals of Yedo," by Haségawa Settan, 5 vols., 1839, procurable for about a sovereign (see Illustrations on pages 116, 128). The year closes with the sasankwa and cha, as it is ushered in with the camellia. One of the most popular games at cards is at present the Hanaawase, or "Matching of Flowers." In this the following, which correspond in their order to the twelve months of the year, are used:—Pine, plum, cherry, wisteria, iris, tree peony, Lespedeza, *Eularia Japonica*, chrysanthemum, maple, willow, Paulownia.

Lastly, falling leaves and petals have always exercised a

great fascination upon the poetical and artistic mind. We even read of the great warrior Hachiman reining in his charger to watch them. Poets have sung of them for a thousand years.

“Too lightly woven must the garments be—
Garments of mist—that clothe the coming spring :
In bold disorder see them fluttering
Soon as the zephyr breathes above the lea.”

YUKIHIRA, A.D. 818—893.

The artist frequently utilises them to fill a vacant corner in his composition. No one, probably, who has not seen the country has any idea of the beauty of the showers of colours which an equinoctial gale would carry over the face of a land so full of blossom as this.

There is a goddess of flowers, by name Mokugé-hiraku-yahimé-no-mikoto. She holds in her right hand a mirror and in her left a tamagushi, a branch of the sakaki tree with strips of paper attached to it, symbolic of the magatama or sacred jade ornaments, which in ancient times formed part of the tamagushi. (See Dickins, “Fugaku Hiyaku, Kei,” p. 11.)

A difficulty is often experienced in discriminating between Japanese and Chinese work. A little study of the method of each nation in delineating flowers will prevent mistakes. For instance, in the room in which I am writing are two vases ; around the neck of each is a tendril and on the backs a sort of rose-tree in bloom, but both are conventionalised so as to be unrecognisable ; this points at once to a Chinese origin. Again, on the body of each of the vases is an elegantly dressed lady receiving a fish from the hands of a boy ; the attitudes of the figures, the dresses, and their colours are as nearly alike on each as hand painting can make them : there would have been variations throughout had they been Japanese. The dress the lady wears is open down the front, disclosing a petticoat not worn in Japan.

CHAPTER X.

FAUNA.

"The people have the nature rather of birds or butterflies than of ordinary human beings."—*Sir E. Arnold.*



No. 85.—*A Tamuki. From a Netsuké. (Gilbertson Collection.)*

THE Japanese artist is certainly not so successful in limning the higher forms of animal life as he is those of the floral kingdom. For one thing, he is obliged very often to draw creatures which are not indigenous to the country, and which he has never seen in the flesh; for instance, his Buddhist deities, owing to their Indian origin, insist on attaching to themselves as attributes the elephant, the lion, and the tiger; these he is often called upon to introduce into pictures out of his imagination, or from a copy contorted out of all resemblance by continuous repetition. Moreover, as he is not proficient at drawing the face of his deity in profile, he has very often

to foreshorten their attributes, and the mess in which he then finds himself is terrible; his elephant appears to be modelled on the form of one of those blown-out, elephant-shaped balloons which come to this country from the East; his tiger takes the similitude of a striped cat, whilst his lion is a puppy with hairy appendages placed just where fancy pleases. He is, however, more at home as he descends the scale, and is hardly to be equalled in his portraiture of birds, fishes, and insects.

Japan is less bountifully supplied with beasts, whether wild or tame, than almost any other country. Wild ones are scarce, owing to the small quantity of uncultivated ground. Domestic animals are not plentiful, because the Buddhist doctrine of transmigration prohibits the eating of meat; so the ground is given up to vegetables and not to pasture. Carnivorous animals are confined to the bear, wolf, racoon, fox, marten, and badger.

It may be well to commence our notes upon animal-drawing by a mention of the twelve members of the Chinese duodenary cycle which have been adopted by the Japanese. The day in these countries is divided into twelve horary periods of two hours, to each of which an animal appertains. They start from 11 P.M. in this order: the rat, ox, tiger, hare, dragon, serpent, horse, goat, monkey, cock, dog, boar. Thus



No. 86.—*Signs of the Zodiac.*

the delineation of one of these upon the reverse of a sword-guard will usually afford an indication as to the hour at which the event upon the front is taking place. The months and the years* are also called by the names of these animals, and hence they have been termed the signs of the Zodiac. Their origin has been traced to the Tartars, and it is singular that our ram, bull, scorpion, and lion have an affinity to them.

* The years have certain cycles which are known by names—the years'

Japan has now adopted the European method of reckoning time except so far as assimilating the Christian era is concerned. The intro in illustration No. 86 shows a portion of them, the rest being on the other side.

Of the members of this cycle we have already noticed the tiger and dragon.

The ox is, as we have seen, associated with Roshi (p. 46) and with the peach (p. 125). In a recumbent attitude it is also connected with the great minister Tenjin, as he used to ride it whilst in exile.

The rat is a prime favourite in Japan, in spite of its infesting every house until it becomes a positive nuisance; it waits upon Daikoku, the god of wealth (see p. 53); it is often depicted upon metal-work, criticising a kakemono. Metal-workers are very fond of making their rats piebald, often for the reason that their so doing makes their task harder. Mice are few in comparison with rats.

The hare (*usagi*) figures very frequently in Japanese Art, but it looks more like a rabbit than a hare. It was once a sacred animal, and worshipped as such. It lives a thousand years, and turns white when half that age, though it is not, curiously enough, emblematic of longevity. It has been associated with the full moon for ages past, partly from a supposed resemblance to an outline marked upon that satellite, and partly because the unselfish hare of Indian legends which threw itself into the fire as food for Buddha, and was transferred to the moon.* I am informed by the Rev. S. Coode Hore (who has collected the folk-lore on the subject) that the legend of

names for the present century, which are often required by collectors, are as follows:—

Kyōwa . . . 1801-4	Ansei . . . 1854-60
Bunkwa . . . 1804-18	Manen . . . 1860-61
Bunsei . . . 1818-30	Bunkyū . . . 1861-64
Tempō . . . 1830-44	Genji . . . 1864-65
Kōkwa . . . 1844-48	Keiō . . . 1865-68
Kaei . . . 1848-54	Meiji . . . 1868

The intermediate years are counted thus:—1803, third year of Kyōwa.

* See Harley's "Moon Lore," pp. 60—68.

the hare in the moon is known in every quarter of the globe. When drawn in conjunction with the moon it is almost always seated and surrounded by the scouring rush. It is often to be seen pounding in a mortar the elixir of life; this has probably an Indian origin. The Chinese represent the moon by a *rabbit* pounding rice in a mortar. The Japanese by a *hare* who is pounding rice for a *mochi* or rice cake—the word “*mochi*” having also the meaning “full moon.” The hare is also drawn gambolling over the waves, whereby it is supposed to impregnate itself.

Although the horse (*uma*) is frequently rendered by the Japanese artist he is seldom, if ever, successful with it, as may be seen by the great Hokusai's portrayal of a rampant steed in the legend of the lady who showed her strength by holding it in with her foot (Illustration No. 88). This is the more remarkable, because many artists spend their whole life in painting nothing else, as pictures of horses form votive offerings at more than one celebrated resort for pilgrims.



So, too, a frequent feat is to draw a horse in eight strokes, or to compress a herd of a hun-

dred scampering within a very small compass. The horse is very often associated with a flowering prunus; I have come across as many as three or four such in quite a small collection of sword-guards, but I have not yet learnt the reason for the connection. The hours allocated to him are from 11 A.M. to 1 P.M., and he is the symbol of manhood.

The goat, although one of the cycle, was until recently unknown in Japan, which probably accounts for its being so seldom met with in Art; sheep are also rare, but deer are

No. 87.—Hare, or Usagi, pounding rice for a Mochi, or Rice Cake.

common, and are kept tame in many of the parks attached to



No. 88. — Kugutsuné Kaniko, the Strong Woman of Keizu Oni. From Hokusai's "Manga."

the temples. (See Illustration, page 107.)

Dogs are usually round, fluffy, tailless creatures, and are the Chin or lap-dogs which were introduced from Macao in the seventeenth century by the Portuguese. There are also pariah dogs, for whom perhaps the proverb was created: "If dogs go about they must expect the stick."

The boar (*ino-shishi*) is a great favourite with netsuké-makers, who delight in the story of the artist O-kio, who painted so realistically, that a wild boar which he thought to be asleep and drew as he saw it, was declared by a critic to be dead, which it turned out to have been. The artist Tamétaka was especially notable for his boar netsukés. There evidently is some reason, which I have not yet ascertained, for the frequent delineation of such an ugly creature upon delicate articles such as inros.

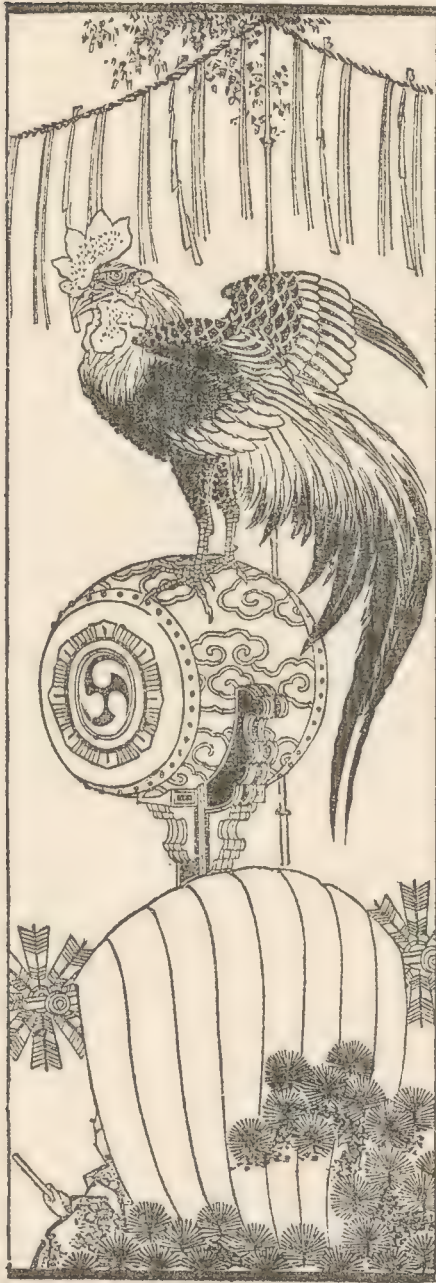
In no particular does the Japanese betray the Chinese origin of his work more than in his draughtsmanship of monkeys (*saru*). He finds the long-armed breed so very attractive and useful, that he is continually introducing it, although it is not indigenous to the country, where the only species is the red-faced ape (*macacus speciosus*), whose tail is short, and fur fine and yellowish. The monkey is a great favourite with artists, and many, notably Sosen, have made the portrayal of its downy coat a speciality, in which they have never been excelled. Its playfulness and grotesqueness were sure to attract the sympathies of the humorous Japanese, who has even enlisted it into the service of his (Shintō) religion. Whilst statues are erected in its honour in that rôle, it does not escape the degradation of serving the wandering showman, as recent ivory carvings so often bear witness.

The three *saru* often seen on metal work are the trinity, composed of the blind, deaf, and dumb, who are worshipped because they will neither see, hear, nor speak any evil.

Amongst other mammals we must not overlook the bat (*komori*), of which there are ten varieties, and whose peculiarly formed wings are seized upon frequently and happily as a motive for ornamentation. The bat also often figures on Chinese porcelain, etc., but probably for another reason; its name *fuhs* has the same sound as *fuh* "happiness."

The cock (*ondori*) is especially attractive to the Japanese eye by reason of his plumage.

His connection with the temple drum has been already noted (p. 23). The ornament at the end of the drum, in Hokusai's Illustration (No. 89), consisting of three balls with tails, which form a circle, after permeating Japan and being the commonest decoration in the empire, has come to be received even into English millinery, for the writer saw it recently at Ascot adorning a wonderful dress of white and gold. Called the *mitsu-tomoyé*, it probably has a phallic origin, but in Buddhism it is held to be significant of the heaping up of myriads of good influences, good luck, long life, etc. It is the second badge of the once-powerful house of Arima, but, besides this, is found on roof-tiles, lanterns (at the *matsuri*, or religious illuminations), and on drums at the *Tanabata* festival. The writer in looking through a collection of moths and butterflies recently formed in Japan by Mr. J. H. Leech, saw one which may have possibly suggested the idea of the



No. 89.—Cock on a Drum. From Hokusai's "*Ehon Tei-kun Orai*."

ornamentation. The butterfly is a common one in Japan, and,

as will be seen from the Illustration No. 90, it bears upon its wing a marking which is exactly in the form of one of the three parts which is upon the mitsu-tomoyé. It is curious that this form is apparently seen by the Japanese in wave eddies. We have noted it as such on a box-cover dating from the seventeenth century, by Kajikawa I. But the supposed derivations are almost endless; falling snow, waves dashing against a rock, a *torno* or glove, and the crescent moon upon the sun, have all been suggested. The last named, as representing the male and female principles in nature, has much to recommend it.

I was surprised in a series of paintings sent over recently from Japan to find one artist repeatedly placing snails on his trees, but almost by the same post an article in the Japanese mail came to hand showing that Japan boasted the largest tree-



No. 90.

snails (*clausilia*) in the world, as well as the oldest of all living forms of this great group; so, too, it has the largest salamander and owl. Fowls are common in Japan, and the Japanese fondness for young ones and pets is evidenced in the frequent drawings of hens with chickens.

No one who has studied the Art of the country will be surprised to hear that the fox (*kitsuné*) and the badger, or racoon-faced dog (*tanuki*), are everywhere abundant. Each is credited with the power of assuming other forms; the *tanuki* is often drawn sitting on its haunches, drumming on its stomach apparently to the moon, but in reality in the hope of misleading travellers by this delicious sound; it also hides amongst the lotuses with the same intent (see Illustration No. 85), and acts in legend the part of pantaloon to the fox's harlequin. The badger resembles the American more than the

European species, its face is doglike, its tail short and bushy, and it metamorphoses itself into inanimate objects, such as articles of furniture.

Not every fox has magic power, but at the age of a century it can take the form of a woman and can possess human



No. 91.—*Foxes extinguishing Chochin (Lanterns).*

beings, and at a thousand it is admitted to heaven, becomes the celestial fox and has nine tails. It has the same character for thieving, mischievousness, and cunning as in Western countries. It is honoured as the messenger of Inari-Sama, god of the harvest and especially of the rice-field. Little

temples dedicated to it are often to be seen on hillocks in the rice-fields, and figures of seated foxes in stone border the entrance to the pathway leading to them; upon the altars which are raised by the farmers, offerings of rice are placed. It is even worshipped in large towns such as Kyōto by merchants and officials, and its little shrine, with bronze bells attached, may



No. 92.—Crane. From a Sword-guard. (Gilbertson Collection.)

be seen in their gardens. It is smaller than our fox and is found associated with the chrysanthemum, owing to a legend (see Reed's "Japan," vol. ii. p. 103), and perhaps also because it has a fondness for gardens which it frequents, even for those in the large towns. In the Illustration No. 91 it will be found putting out lanterns in order to eat the candles. The inscription to this engraving states that there is an old legend

that foxes used to practise this, and that it is still true. Folks who have been bewitched by foxes are still often to be met with.

Cats (*neko*—rat-killers), like their kinsfolk in Manxland, dispense with tails.

Squirrels are frequently drawn in conjunction with the vine, but they are not numerous in any part of the country.

The king of birds in Japan is undoubtedly the crane (*tsuru*). It is termed by country folk “my great lord.” It is one of the representatives of longevity, and is held in much veneration. “One crane’s voice is better than the chirping of a thousand sparrows.” The Japanese evidently delights in the manner in which it lends itself to decoration, by the graceful lines of its body both when flying and at rest, and by its colours, for he drags it into his work on every possible occasion, although the bird is by no means common in Japan. The two kinds which are found there are the white, and the ashen coloured save for a red crown and black tail feathers and upper neck. The red-crowned or Mantchurian crane (*Grus viridirostris*), has never been indigenous to the country and is rapidly dying out. It is it alone which is typical of longevity. Cranes of both sorts are becoming rare. The big bronze cranes which we see in curio shops have been used in gardens in Japan. Fukusas with the crane and pine embroidered on them are presented to new-born babes.

Silver herons or egrets (*sagi*) are more common, and are usually to be seen following the labourers amongst the rice; they share with cranes the common appellation by foreigners of “storks.” White animals are sacred and are most esteemed. Hence the proverb, “To talk to the crows of the white heron.”

The gorgeous plumage of the peacock naturally attracts artists of all sorts. But as it is only two centuries since it was introduced into Japan, it is only found upon modern Art. It must not be confounded with the Hō, of which I spoke at page 61.

The pheasant, on the other hand, originally came to us from China and Japan. The beautiful plumage, especially of the male bird, is taken advantage of wherever colour is required, notably in embroideries. It usually consorts with

the cherry, both being so beautifully arrayed. So, too, the Mandarin duck, which, with its mate, is typical of conjugal felicity, is an oft-repeated subject.

Wild geese have apparently always been an attraction to



No. 93.—*Hérons in Mother-of-pearl. Inro. (Author's Collection.)*

the artist; their rapid motion and formal flight have both been most useful to him when he wished to import vigorous action into his work. Novelists and poets have been similarly affected, and many stories of the heroic days are connected

with them, notably that of Kiyowara Takénori, who at the battle of Toriumi guessed the whereabouts of his opponent, Abe no Sadato, by the movements of the wild fowl. Geese are associated with rushes, it being believed that in making long flights they carry rushes in their beaks, which they drop on the waters and rest on.

Falconry was a sport which was formerly enjoyed by the upper classes, and many pictures bear witness to this, as do the embroideries, where the bird sits on a perch with a cord round its leg. Falcons (*taka*) and eagles (*washi*) are to be



No. 94.—*Chidori*. From the "*Yanagawa Gwa-jo*."

found more frequently on old than new work, but they continue to be objects on which the metal-worker lavishes all his skill. The eagle by Miochin at South Kensington, for which £1,000 was paid, is an instance of this.

Another bird which is still employed in the service of man is the cormorant, which may often be seen perched on the bows of a boat, whilst the fisherman holds the torch which attracts the fish (see Illustration No. 95), or seated on a wooden dipper which he carries over his shoulder.

The soft grey plumage of the pigeon and dove finds favour with the carvers in ivory and mother-of-pearl, and its representation in these materials leaves little to be desired. The dove is curiously enough sacred to Hachiman, and is the messenger of this god of war (see p. 27) and always to be found in the precincts of his temples.

The sparrow is as much at home in Japan as in England, and is not, I believe, an importation, or voted a nuisance, as it is elsewhere. The artist in metal-work delights in introducing its copper-coloured body, and the painter finds it a useful adjunct in imparting life and movement to his simple subject of waving grass or bamboo. We referred in our chapter on legends to the story of the tongue-cut sparrow, p. 76; it also figures in other stories.

Flights of small birds will be frequently seen in seascapes scudding over the surf. These are chidori, which in my first edition I translated godwits. Ornithologists take exception to this, but they have not supplied me with an alternative name. Chidori fly in flocks, and are very numerous (see Illustration No. 94). Korin has a special manner of drawing chidori on lacquer; which has been much copied by his imitators and admirers. They utter a plaintive cry, which has for long ages affected the poets with admiration.

According to Mr. Dickins the most beautiful of all the birds is the sankohō, a flycatcher, of bright cobalt blue and glaucous green colour and with two very long tail feathers, but I have never come across it on works of Art. The jay with its bright plumage and the wood-pecker are used by lacquerists.

The thrush is common, and a bird very frequently met with is the nightingale; its plumage is olive-green, mingled with grey, its breast being a greyish-white. The bird which is so often depicted flying across the moon is a small cuckoo of nocturnal habits, called Ho-Toh-Toh from its note. The legend of this, which dates from the twelfth century, is set out at length in Reed's "Japan," vol. ii. p. 101. So a poet says:—"When I gaze towards the place where a cuckoo has been singing—nought remains but the moon in the early

spring." A kingfisher is beautifully portrayed upon a sword-guard in my collection.



No. 95.—Cormorant Fishing. From Hokusai's "*Ehon Tei-kun Orai*."

Wild geese are also associated with the moon, thus a poem a thousand years old tells:—"The moon on an autumn night, making visible the very number of the wild geese flying past with wings inter-crossed in the white clouds."

Other European birds are the raven, the house-swallow, redbreast, wren, tomtit, finch, snipe and the quail (very frequently met with and almost always associated with the millet).

The finest work of the great metallists has been lavished upon imitations of lobster and crayfish, facsimiled in every joint. One by Miochin belonging to Mr. E. Gilbertson is so wonderfully flexible, that it feels quite uncanny when laid in the open hand. Crabs grow to enormous size, their legs being sometimes four feet long. They find a place in every form of Art, the workman delighting in reproducing their articulations.

One of the instruments of martial music was a spiral shell of large form, which, being bored at the point, was used as a trumpet. It is often

seen in Art, and there is a Japanese proverb apropos of bragging, "He blows the Triton's horn."

I have a sword-guard on which a Japanese gardener, partly in fun, but principally from fear, is retreating from an ungainly animal, which I find out to be the giant salamander; it attains to a length of five feet.

Toads, which the artist is so fond of modelling, especially in bronze, and frogs, are common, and are the same species as ours, but the toad has a large head. The toad is often seen in company with an eccentric individual called Gama Sennin (see page 46). It is supposed to possess a spiritual essence and to be able thus to escape from captivity.

Snakes are common, and attain to a length of five feet; they, too, are favourites with the artists in metal-work, who excel to a greater extent in portraying them than in anything else. A brass snake in my collection is a marvel of realism and at the same time of decorative treatment. Yasuchika's snakes are celebrated.

Every Japanese is a fisherman. It is his favourite pursuit, and his patience is worthy of the most devoted disciple of the gentle craft. So far as regards the sea, he is amply rewarded, for it teems with varieties of the finny tribe; in fact, it is said to be more plenteously furnished than any other water on the face of the globe. The *tai*, or bream, is highly thought of: it is the one associated with Ebisu, the god of daily food (see p. 50). There are also abundance of mackerel, plaice, flounders, herrings, tunny, and enormous bonitos; and in fresh water, salmon (*ai* and *yamemé*), char, trout, carp (*koi*), and eels.

A fish, usually a carp, leaping up a waterfall, is a common object in Japanese Art; it typifies ambition and perseverance, and was rewarded by transformation into a dragon.

A curious custom in Japan is to send a piece of dried cuttle-fish with every present. It is supposed to be a memento of the time when the nation were all fishermen, and such humble fare was the rule, and therefore is a suggestion of lowliness. A dried head and shoulders is the commonest representation in Art of this custom.

No one acquainted with Japanese Art will be surprised to learn that vast quantities of insects (*mushi*) find a home in

Japan, or that its inhabitants do not dislike them, but rather the contrary. The wealth of beetles and butterflies is enormous; and Rein states that more varieties can be found within a few miles of Tokyō than in the whole of the British Islands. In the autumn especially the air is alive with the chirping of the grasshoppers, etc., and songs a thousand years old testify to the pleasure which the inhabitants derive therefrom.

“Fain would one weep the whole night long
As weeps the sudu-mushi’s* song,
Who chants her melancholy lay
Till night and darkness pass away.”

From the *Genji Monogatari*, A.D. 990.

To Europeans the monotonous chanting of the insects becomes wearisome, but apparently the Japanese differ from us in their musical tastes, for they sometimes even rave about the croaking of the frog.

In a recent French work upon Japan, the author harps upon *les cigales*, which “*font leur joli bruit sonore.*”

Butterflies (*cho*) of rare species, as well as many known to us, abound. There are already 137 different species catalogued and 4,000 varieties of moths, more than double what there are in Great Britain. They are the symbol of womanhood, and ornaments in their similitude are worn in the hair in token thereof. They also come into the marriage ceremony (see p. 96).

The quantity of stagnant water in the rice-fields favours the propagation of dragon-flies. They are always being met with in Art, and the empire is even named after them, from its resembling them in shape.

The praying mantis and the grasshopper are great favourites with artists, the ugly form of the former being even perpetuated in silver models. Grasshoppers and other insects are kept as pets in those delicate little wicker cages which frequently come over to this country.

Many shells are used. The mother-of-pearl is principally obtained from the Awabi, a mollusc whose covering is called Venus’s Earshell (*Halotis gigantea*).

* The sudu-mushi, or bell-insect, is one of the most sweetly singing of the tribe; its song resembles a tinkling bell.

CHAPTER XI.

LACQUER.

To show a really fine piece of lacquer to one of the uncultivated natives of Europe or America is as the Japanese proverb says, "like giving guineas to a cat."—*Chamberlain's "Things Japanese."*

HAVING surveyed the various influences and motives which have affected or are evidenced in Japanese Art, I now propose to touch upon the Art industries which most frequently come under the view of the public in this country.

There is no country in the world which owes so much to its art as Japan. Japan would never have attracted the extraordinary notice which she so rapidly did had it not been for her Art. Her literature, her history, her polity, nay, even her physical features, are known but slightly here, and elicit but a trifling amount of interest, but her Art manufactures have penetrated the length and breadth of the world. It is true that compared with some European nations these still bear but a small proportion, but they are rapidly increasing. In 1883 out of a total export of thirty-six million yen, Art objects amounted to two millions and a quarter. In 1887 they had increased to six millions out of fifty-one. These compare with an export in France of 1,234 million francs out of 3,649.

Foremost amongst the wares for which Japan is celebrated is lacquer, in the manufacture of which it stands pre-eminent amongst nations. Lacquer has been an industry in Japan beyond the ken of man. Before the Christian era there is said to have been an officer whose business it was to superintend its production at the Mikado's court, and specimens more than a thousand years old are in existence.* With such antiquities

* It may be taken for granted that the majority of curios are of later dates than those assigned to them.

it is almost useless to deal here, as examples of that age are likely to be seen or acquired by very few, if any, of my readers. I, however, give two illustrations, one (No. 3A, p. 4) of a copy of a box in the Nara treasures, which dates from the seventh century. It was facsimiled by Zeshin the well-known lacquerer, and is almost equally interesting on that account. No. 96, a perfume-box made in the fourteenth century out of a tube of a Buddhist roll bible, dates back to the eighth century. It is of gold lac, decorated in togidashi, and represents the Emperor Buwō going to visit the tomb of his father Bunnō. Both these pieces are in Mr. T Haya-shi's collection.

The manufacture of lac will be found described in Gonse's "*L'Art Japonais*," Audsley's "*Arts of Japan*," and Ernest Hart's "*Lectures*," but the accounts have almost all originated in a parliamentary blue-book by Consul Quin, where it is set out at great length. The following notes are derived from the same source, with the addition of some hitherto unpublished information.

Mr. E. Gilbertson, the possessor of over a thousand pieces of lac, and an indefatigable student of the subject, sends the following note of warning upon the processes as set forth in the text-books:—"I suspect that there are great varieties in the modes of manufacture. Probably, every eminent master had his own peculiar method of producing certain effects. Usually I find a certain order of processes recorded in the text-books, without, apparently, the least suspicion that they apply only to certain classes of articles. I have dissected various specimens of lacquer, with the result of discovering that these descriptions were altogether inapplicable to Inros, and I believe also many other sorts of lacquer. I learned, moreover, that there is a great difference in the treatment of objects of the same class by different makers; in fact, all the descriptions of the art of lacquering can do no more than give a general idea of the processes employed."

Wood is the most usual basis for lacquer articles, and the following notes upon the manufacture refer, unless mention is made to the contrary, to those made in that manner.

The various pieces of wood of which the article is to be composed are first cut and fitted; these are often no thicker than a sheet of paper. Any interstices there may be in the grain of the wood or the joints are filled with a composition of powdered stone or chopped hemp, which answers to our



No. 96.—Perfume box. Eighth Century Lacquer. (Hayashi Collection.)

system of priming. It is needless to say that the wood (which is usually *hinoki* for boxes, and *honoki* (magnolia) for sword-sheaths) has been seasoned and dried. How carefully this is done is evident from the fact that a piece is hardly ever encountered which shows the slightest sign of shrinkage or warping. Boxes made two hundred years ago are as perfect

in this respect as the day when they issued from the hands of their producer. I have one in my possession (Illustration 105),



No. 97.—*The Priest Saigio, Kamakura Lac. Fifteenth Century.*
(Tomkinson Collection.)

which is only a fair sample of such work, where a tray in the interior will rest upon the compressed air, which cannot escape, so perfectly does it fit. I am sorry to say that this fact oftentimes elicits more of my friends' interest than the artistic workmanship which is everywhere evident in the piece. This marvellous construction is even more strikingly exhibited in the joining of the various compartments of the inro, or me-

dicine case, where each section not only fits as if it had been made by the most accurately devised machine, but is capable of transposition with its fellows.

But to proceed with the details of the construction. After the fittings of the joints have set firmly, all excrescences are ground down with a whetstone, and the whole is covered with a thick coat composed of a mixture of powdered and burnt clay and varnish, which, when dry, is again smoothed down with the stone. This done, the article is in most cases covered with silk, hempen cloth, or paper, which is pasted on with the utmost care, so that neither crease nor joint is seen. The texture of the cloth can, however, be distinguished on many even of the finest pieces if held so as to allow the light to reflect from them. The piece then receives from one to five thin coats of the clay and varnish mixture, each being allowed ample time to dry. According to Audsley, the article resembles at this stage a finely-rubbed brick. This surface having been made perfectly smooth by use of the whetstone, the process of lacquering commences, a spatula at first and afterwards a thin flat brush of human hair being used to lay it on. Space will not permit our going through the numerous differences which attend the laying on, polishing, and drying of the different layers of lac,* until the final coat is reached, which requires to be laid with cotton wool with the utmost delicacy, and is at once almost rubbed off with soft paper; this, when dry, is polished with deer's horn ashes reduced to an impalpable powder and applied with the finger.† Enough has been said to show the unexampled care which has attended the process and the time which all this takes—the drying alone of a good piece requiring, up to this point, under the most favourable circumstances, 530 hours.

But we have as yet only got as far as the preparation of the background. There has still to be added to this the super-

* Lac is not a varnish in the usual acceptation of the word, but the sap of the *Rhus vernicifera*, which contains about eighty-five per cent. of urushic acid, two and a quarter per cent. of a nitrogenous substance, rather more than three per cent. of a gum soluble in water, like gum arabic, and the rest water. The quantity of urushi (lacquer) produced throughout the empire in 1886 was twenty-five and a half million *me* (100 *me* = 1 lb. troy).

† It is a common error to suppose that the polish on lac is effected by the varnish; it is entirely by the polishing just described.

structure of decoration, whether it be in gold, silver, mother-of-pearl, or a variety of metals. The metallic dusts or powders used for this are infinite in variety of composition, size, weight, and shape, are all distinguished by the Japanese workmen by different names, and each is brought into his service in accordance with rules long ago formed for him by the experience of his ancestors.

The most oft recurring form of lac is that popularly known as *avanturine*, from its resemblance to the *avanturine* Venetian glass. Its correct name is *nashiji*, from its supposed likeness to the spotted rind of a pear (*nashi*). It consists in either mosaicing the ground with particles of gold dust, or in covering it with gold dust until it assumes, as the French say, a "crushed barley-sugar" appearance. In this latter process great skill is required to attain a perfectly even distribution of the flakes; when done this is covered with coatings of a fine transparent lacquer, often amounting to a dozen in number. *Nashiji* is usually made either of pure gold, gold and silver, or pure silver, but there are seven degrees of fineness in each.

Giobu-nashiji (said to be named after the inventor, who lived in the early part of the eighteenth century) is where small squares of gold leaf, called *kirikané* (or cut metal), are used instead of the powdered gold; but this style is found in pieces of much earlier date (see Illustration 99). In designs where it is finely carried out, it is wonderful to observe the regularity with which each of these squares has been laid, especially when, as is often the case, they diminish in size: a similar method of work is sometimes to be found in minute pieces of mother-of-pearl. Each piece is applied separately by means of a thin-pointed bamboo stick.

Togi-dashi is where the pattern is the result of grinding and polishing. The design is transferred on to the lacquer by means of a paper upon which the lines are traced with a slow-drying lacquer; this, when in position, is emphasized by a little fine white powder and then gilt, those portions which have to come brightest being raised above those of a lower tone by means of a coating of a thick stiff lacquer and gold



No. 98.—*Fan. Daimyo Lac. Eighteenth Century.*

dust. When this has dried, all portions of the ground or pattern which yet require gilding are covered with lacquer and then dusted with gold ; this, when dry, is again twice lacquered and thoroughly dried. The surface is then rubbed down until the gold design begins to show itself. Great care has to be taken so as to prevent injury to the gold during the numerous coatings and grindings which are necessary until the pattern shows up satisfactorily through the glaze ; when this is accomplished it has still to be polished.

The name *hira-makiyé* is applied to all lacs where the design is not raised above the surface more than the thickness of the lines. The details and transparent effects are usually produced by graduated or softened-off dustings of metal. The skill consists in so distributing the powders as to secure the exact proportions and shadings. In fine examples a mistake as to this never occurs.

This process is often combined with *taka-makiyé*, where the surface is raised or indented. In this, as in the process last described, the ground-work has to be entirely finished before the ornamentation is commenced. Low relief is accomplished by dusting the design in wet lacquer with fine camellia charcoal powder ; for high relief *sabi* (a mixture of burnt clay and lac varnish) is used ; both when dry undergo various polishings and grindings.

Other sorts of lacquer requiring notice are *tsui-shiū* (red), and *tsui-koku* (black), where the design is carved out of a thick coating of lac. But the most remarkable work in this way is *Guri lac*, where the body of the work is formed of superimposed layers of various coloured lacs, through which designs, usually consisting of flowing curves, are cut in V-shaped incisions, sometimes to the depth of a quarter of an inch, thus exposing the layers. Fine pieces of this lac are not common, but it is frequently imitated by colouring the sides of the incision so as to resemble the layers. A good magnifying glass will usually enable the imposture to be detected ; and here I may remark upon the value of this instrument in the examination of Japanese manufactures, especially metal work. Desirable specimens should always stand its test. Yosei (1650

—1670) introduced from China a practice of carving Guri lac into landscapes and figures, utilising the different coloured layers to represent different planes or portions of the picture. Heijiuro (1596—1615) was the great master of Guri lac.

Chinkin-bori dates no farther back than the early part of the last century, when it was copied from the Chinese. It is similar to dry-point etching, and consists in incising the pattern in fine lines into the body of the lac with a graver or rat's tooth, and filling up the incisions with powdered gold.

Mention must also be made of works in monochrome, where the pattern is in the same colour as the ground; black is a favourite colour and the result is thoroughly artistic. Koma Kuansai excelled in this.

Those who care to see the materials of which lacquer is made, and specimens in various states of manufacture, can do so at Kew, where they will be found in the top floor of the museum. These include sections of



No. 99.—*Inro*, signed *Honnami Koyetsu*.
(*Tomkinson Collection*.)

the tree from which the lac exudes, the lacs themselves of various colours, from light grey, green, and yellow, to brown and black; * the hempen cloth, silk, and paper in which the object is cased, the clays and colours used, the stones, brushes, tools, and even the drying press. Then there are several plaques showing the processes of *togi-dashi*, *taka-makiy *, and the manufacture of the *nashiji* or *avanturine* ground; in

* Jet black arises either from acetate of iron and water having been mixed with the lacquer, or finely powdered charcoal dust, or lampblack.

this latter there are bands of four different kinds of avanturine (presumably gold, and silver in two mixtures, and silver), and it is curious to observe how little difference there is between them upon completion, the yellowness of the superimposed lacs having made them all of the same barley-sugar hue. There is also a case showing fifty various methods of lacquering sword-sheaths, but it is placed too high for study. These illustrations would be more useful for study at the South Kensington Museum.

Until the opening up of Japan thirty-five years ago, the only specimens of Japanese lacquer known in Europe were the few pieces which found their way out of the country in the cargoes of wares which the Dutch settlers were allowed to export. How few these were is shown by a search of the records of the eighteenth century, which contain entries to this effect: that eleven ships sailed in one year, carrying 16,580 pieces of porcelain and 12 pieces of lac. The reason for this was that its exportation was forbidden. There were collectors of it even in those times, amongst whom Madame de Pompadour (who expended 110,000 livres upon it) and Marie Antoinette were the most notable. The latter's collection, of about one hundred pieces, is in the Louvre, and M. Gonse states that there is hardly a single one which is not of an inferior quality. The most notable pieces of this sort in this country were those included in the Hamilton collection. For these enormous prices were paid at its dispersal.

Fashion, and knowledge still more so, have as in other matters moved forward rapidly of late. It is not much more than a decade ago that collectors would talk about, and have nothing but, "Daimyo" lac. Many of them had but a vague idea of what was included in that term, but they made it all embracing, as they well could do, for there are probably few sorts of lac which were not at one time or another made for the great princes. I have asked many collectors and Japanese experts what they meant by the term, and all have differed. But the majority would seem to confine it to the large pieces of furniture which were made for the Daimyos actual use, and to the smaller pieces ornamented with diaper or flowing

patterns of a formal nature, and, usually, the crests of the owner. The fan (Illustration No. 98) has a thoroughly Daimyoesque design. The sho-chiku-bai or pine, bamboo, and prunus, which so often recur, may be said almost to come under the category of a Daimyo pattern.



No. 100.—*Suzuribako, School of Koma. Eighteenth Century.*

The oldest lac with any approach to artistic quality which comes into the foreign market is that which is known as Kamakura-bori, so called from the city of that name, the ancient capital of the Shoguns (see p. 39). Old specimens of this

are not frequent, but I once encountered half-a-dozen examples in a collection sent over from Japan for sale. They consisted for the most part of figures rather rudely carved, covered with a thick coating of red lac over black, which shows through with age. Illustration No. 97 is a specimen of one of them; it is supposed to be at least four centuries old.

There is a class of small perfume boxes of a circular shape which is not unfrequently met with. They are characterised by solidity (their rims being cased in pewter), and the variety in size and uneven mosaicing of the Giobu squares. They are probably the earliest specimens of lacquer which come over here, and some of them date back to the fourteenth century. Mr. Gillot's magnificent collection of lacquer in Paris contains many notable specimens.

Probably the earliest artist in lac whose work is recognisable by the ordinary collector is Honnami Koyetsu. The date of his birth and death are known (1556—1637), and he was fortunate in passing the last twenty years of his life under the Tokugawa dynasty, who brought in an era of taste and refinement. He was the originator of the schools of Soyetsu and Korin. In the inro (Illustration No. 99) the ground is black lac, which has assumed a brown tint, owing to a substratum of red-coloured lac. The design is simple and dignified, being a part of the wooden structure of a bridge; the piers are mother-of-pearl, the iron bands of lead, the upper portion of gold, inlaid with tesserae in gold and lacquer.

If a specimen in my collection is to be taken as genuine, and it came with a very well-authenticated certificate, Koyetsu's style must be much more archaic than the specimen signed by him (Illustration No. 99) would lead one to suppose. From a comparison of the pieces of this date which have come under my notice, I should say that of the two, one was pre- and the other post-Koyetsu, Mr. Tomkinson's inro being almost identical with the work of Soyetsu.

A school which owes its origin to the teachings of Koyetsu, was that of Tsuchida Soyetsu. According to Mr. Ernest Hart, the pupil chiefly gave himself up to the same delicate

style of work affected by his master, although some of his productions are characterized by largeness and boldness of design. Soyetsu, who lived in the seventeenth century, attained to a great age, and in the Gilbertson collection are two inros, upon



No. 101.—*Suzuribako*, by *Korin*. *Eighteenth Century*.

which are statements that they were executed in the eighty-second and eighty-fourth years of his age; the lac has turned brown and semi-transparent. In a signed inro in the author's collection, the Mikado's treasure-cart is represented on one face; the lacquer is in relief, the frame-work of the cart is

ornamented with Giobu-nashiji, the body is inlaid mother-of-pearl, and the wheels are lead. I may here remark that part if not all of the earlier inlayings in mother-in-pearl were composed of pieces with parallel sides, the lines of junction being vertical. Korin usually shaped his mother-of-pearl, making it one piece, and later on the inlayers did not hesitate at inlaying a single piece of mother-of-pearl over a curve, or even a sharp angle.

The Illustration No. 86, shows a form of early inro of a distinctive character where small metal ornaments, often by the Gotos, are placed upon the surface of the lacquer. These pieces usually date from the seventeenth century.

Another lacquerer of great distinction, founder of a school, who lived in the seventeenth century, and with whose works we are fairly familiar, was Koma Kiuhaku. Authentic specimens of his work are somewhat rare, although he lived to an old age. An inro in the writer's possession, representing three sparrows flying, is chiefly distinguishable for the boldness of the design, the somewhat early character of the nashiji ground, which is of the barley-sugar character, and the fine colour of the black and red lac in the interior lining. He also produced a coloured lac finely dusted with gold and rubbed down: it shows in some lights a metallic lustre, in others a brilliant coloured surface. Red under gold was the most usual form of this. He was noted, too, for his Koma red, which has a steely look in certain lights due to an infusion of gold. The Komas excelled in hira-makiyé. Koma had a son, Yasutaka, who continued his father's work, and the school is still in existence, the most noted member being Koma Kuansai, who attained a high distinction in the last century. Other Komas of note were Bunsai, Kioriu, Yasumasa and Yasunari.

Both Koyetsu and Koma were in a measure the masters of Korin (A.D. 1661—1716), whose name has a magical sound in the ears of most collectors. Once seen, his style is the most easily recognisable of any; but it is very difficult to distinguish between the work of master and pupil. Korin was an artist with the pencil as well as in lacquer, and his designs with the former are notable for their originality and freedom from

convention. The same applies to his works in lacquer, in which the designs are almost repellent by their vigour, and upon such a material as fine lac they appear out of place (see Illustration No. 101).

It will be noticed that, in this example, mother-of-pearl and pewter have been used. Korin was the first to use the latter to any great extent in decoration. It had been employed for several centuries as a preservative to the edges, and it is found occasionally in decoration from the earliest period. Korin also used tin and lead. One distinguishing mark between the master and his imitators is in the gold; in both, the gold will probably be laid on very thickly, but in the master's case, it will be found to be of a rich red hue, pleasant and soft in tone, as opposed to a sickly yellow; it should be noticed that Korin's gold is often full of minute specks which resemble gilded grains of sand.

There is nothing so much sought after by the many collectors as a fine example of Korin's work; for myself I consider it overrated; I admit its surprising vigour, but it has, to me, always an archaic appearance, and carries upon its face the fact that it is imperfect work, work so primitive that one is surprised when one remembers that it only dates back to the beginning of the last century.

Mr. Anderson, however, is of opinion that "to those who have learned to understand his aim, there appears a strength of character rarely apparent in the resplendent work of later years. As a decorative artist, he will always be a genius for the few, a charlatan for the many." (*Pictorial Art*, p. 137.) Mr. Gilbertson adds that "his productions are the eccentricities of a genius; in the hands of his imitators their absurdities stare one in the face too palpably; his style consequently soon disappeared, and deservedly so, for that reason."

The French collectors, who seldom make mistakes, are quietly amassing representative Korins.

An artist, whose work was thoroughly original, but which often shows traces of imperfection, was Ogawa Ritsuō (1662—1746). The box (Illustration No. 102) is in brown wood of a coarse grain, the harder portion of which is left in relief, the

corners and edges being in black lac with a gilt pattern ; the inside and bottom is black lac. The decorations of the cover are in pottery, glazed green, and represent ornamental roof-tiles, one, it will be observed, having the tomoyé ornament. The artist's seal, in the lower left corner, is in white pottery.



No. 102.—*Suzuribako*, by *Ritsuō*. *Eighteenth Century*.

We now proceed to the consideration of work which leaves nothing to be desired, which in itself is the *ne plus ultra* of mechanical perfection, and against which the most hypercritical can only say that occasionally it exhibits traces of a luxurious effeminacy when compared with the masculine pro-

ductions of the artists we have hitherto discussed. For myself, fine examples of Yamamoto Shunsho have a fascination which attaches to the work of no other master. No one who has handled a piece can fail to recognise its perfection. The very silkiness of its surface is a marvel. It can well be imagined that work such as this is incapable of reproduction. It will not photograph satisfactorily, its glossy surface giving off an infinity of reflections. Mechanical reproduction, wood engraving, and chromolithography all fail, and the examples here illustrated, and in fact all the other lac objects, have been principally selected because they are less in-



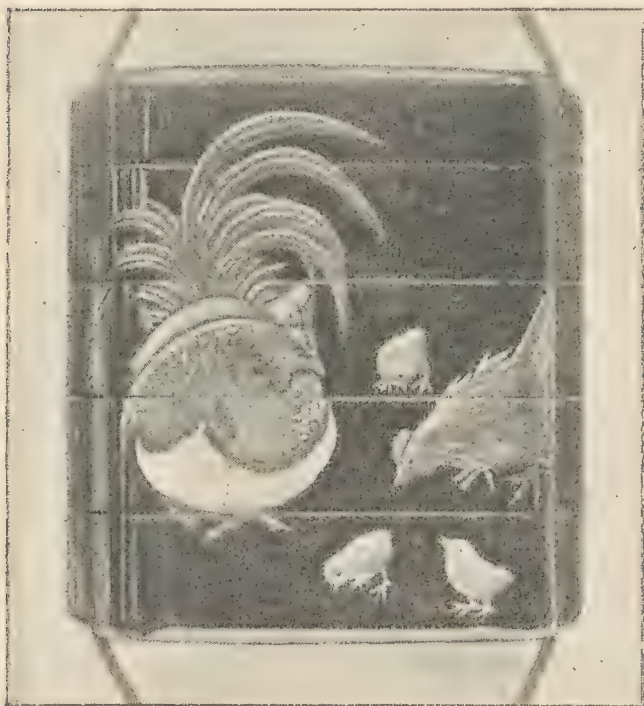
No. 103.—*Bor*, by Nagahidé, Shunsho School. Eighteenth Century. (Author's Collection.)

tractable than others. I wish I could refer my readers to individual pieces in our National Museums, which they could study, but this is impossible, for they do not possess them.

I have been unable to ascertain definitely the date when Yamamoto Shunsho lived. It was probably at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth century.

Mr. Anderson mentions that he was alive in 1780, but this must have been a descendant. In the beautiful example of the work of his pupil Nagahidé (Illustration No. 103), the ground is black, the cranes are in silver lac, and the reeds are drawn in gold with a powdering of gold—the whole is in *hira-makiyé*, or flat-work.

The best-known name in the annals of the lac producers is that of Kajikawa, and the work of this family is most esteemed



No. 104.—*Inro*, by Kajikawa. (*Author's Collection*.)

by the majority of collectors. Mr. Gilbertson has no less than a hundred inros signed by them, and he considers that by their admirable taste and skill they and the Komas raised that article to the highest level of a work of Art. He is of opinion, too, that the first Kajikawa has never been excelled in the

beauty and perfection of his black lac, or the richness of his *nashiji*, and that his gold often rivals Korin's. To this is added sumptuous workmanship, a lavish display of gold, and a very full design. The box which is illustrated here (No. 105) is principally noteworthy for the splendid black brown upon which the gold is richly laid; sides, top, the interior, and even the bottom, all show magnificent workmanship. I have collected some ten or so modest little inros which are said to be the early work of the first Kajikawa. They are

charmingly simple in design, being usually a representation of household ornaments or of pets, a dish with fruit, a bird on a rookery, a crab, or fowls as in the illustration No. 104, where the cock's breast is in ivory. The ground-work is always fine black. All have black interiors with top of risers gilt. None are signed.

There are many other lacquerers who have a place in the first rank, but of whom little can be said here; Yosei, Koami Nagataka who founded a school, Masazane, the three brothers Nagatoshi, Yoshihidé, and Nagata Yuji, Hakusai, Inaba, Nagahidé Mitsutoshi (a wonderful inro-maker), and Hara Yoyusai, all at the latter part of the eighteenth century, and in this, Harui, Hoitsu, Inagawa, Jokasai, Kakosai, Kanetomo, Kikugawa, Kiyokawa, Kuanshiosai, Kuanyosai, Seisei Korin, Ogawa Shomin, Senreisai, Shiomi Masanori, Shokasai, Shomosai, a celebrated maker of encrusted work, who encrusted inros in conjunction with Shibayama (see *post*, Chapter XIII.), Tosen, Toshirio, Toyosai, Tsuné-ou, Zeshin. Mr. Gilbertson has examples in his collection by two hundred and fifty masters, nearly all of whose work is of the first order.

Our Illustration (No. 100) shows the extent to which decoration was carried in good work; here the groundwork is *avan-turine*. The design includes a pipe case (gold lac), tobacco pouch (brown and gold lac), with silver fastener, similar in design to the dragon-head on the Ritsuō (Illustration No. 102), and inro (gold, with inlay of mother-of-pearl); the two beads on the string are in black and red lac, in high relief; the tea jar is of red and black lac, with ivory cover; its case is of gold lac; the jar behind has a lid of tortoise-shell; the guri lac box in the left lower corner is in red lac.

It may be well here to note some of the principal articles which were made of lacquer, and to what purpose they were put.

First of all we have the large suites of furniture, now seldom met with in a complete state in Europe, because whenever they come into the market they are split up by the dealers for the purposes of sale. H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh has a complete set, made of Daimyo lac, which bears the badge of

Prince Toda. In this are included two tansu or stands on



No. 105.—*Bako*, by Kujikawa. Eighteenth Century. (Author's Collection.)

which the set of boxes, nine in number, and a tray, are placed

The boxes include large ones for holding papers, MSS., and books, kobako, or incense game box, and a kodansu, a small cabinet for holding the incense. There is also a shodai, or sloping reading-desk, and the suzuri-bako, or writing-case.

Suzuribakos come over in some quantity to Europe (see Illustrations No.101 and 102), and are not always part of sets. The Fine Art Society's Exhibition included a considerable number, and in nothing was there a finer display of lac. Then we have the picnic boxes (bentobakos), mirror cases, fans, and lastly the oblong-shaped boxes, which, serving here the purpose of glove boxes, are supposed to have been utilised in like manner in their native land. Their use was as letter-carriers. A letter when written was folded and placed inside, and the box tied round by the writer with a silken cord; much stress was laid upon this cord (which is sometimes of very large dimensions and resplendent in colour), and upon the correct method of tying it. The box was then taken to its destination by a servant (who sometimes even had his mouth covered with a cloth so that he might not breathe upon it), and the letter was removed by the recipient. The answer was returned either in the same box or one belonging to its writer. Upon certain occasions the boxes were retained as a gift by the recipient, and this was usually the case when the despatch came from a nobleman. It is needless to add that few of the boxes found in our shops have ever served this purpose.

Lastly we have the inro, which has been so frequently mentioned in this chapter. An inro formed a necessary part of a gentleman's attire. It was attached by a silk cord to a netsuké and strung through the sash. It was used for medicine powders, for perfumes, and as a seal box.*

* Seals for a long period took, and do still, the place of a signature. They were small blocks of wood, ivory, or metal on which was engraved the owner's seal. This was moistened on a vermillion pad and stamped in one or more places on the document. Pictures, and even books, received the seal of the author. Naturally this opened the door to forgery, and so educated persons placed their signature as well as their seal; the latter being also written. It was penal to forge this. The abandonment of seals is now being urged in high quarters, so that another reason for the disuse of inros is imminent.

An inro has usually four trays and a lid, each one fitting on to the other with mathematical precision, so much so that in a good specimen, each piece is capable of transposition. Inros are made of metal, wood, ivory, crystal, bark, shell mosaic, and tortoiseshell, besides wood lacquered. Artistic inros were first introduced by Matahei in the seventeenth century.



No. 106.—*Inro, by Hosetsu. (Author's Collection.)*

In conclusion, the following remarks by Mr. Gilbertson upon collecting lacquer may not be out of place. "If a collector is compelled, from want of space or for any similar reason, to confine himself to one particular class of Japanese Art work, he cannot do better than select inros as the most desirable object. If the netsukés which were attached to them are added, there is no question as to what his choice should be. As illustrations of the history, mythology, and folk-lore of the country they are hardly so rich as the metal-work, or the netsukés; but, as regards that extremely interesting branch of Japanese Art—the branch in which they stand and have always stood absolutely supreme—the art of working in

lacquer, the inro is of surpassing value. It is there one must look for the most perfect examples of lacquer work of every description. Not that larger works, such as writing boxes, perfume boxes, etc., do not afford equally fine examples of the work of the great artists—finer, indeed, from a pictorial point of view, because of the larger spaces available; but in the inro one often finds a treatment of the subject and of the

material that would be inapplicable to the larger surface. The very limit of space and the form in the intro often bring out the artistic knowledge of the designer—very frequently the executant at the same time—in a most remarkable manner. Wonderful harmony both of colour and composition are often combined with a minuteness of detail that makes one wonder what sort of eyes and hands the lacquerers possessed.”

Every collector has his own views on the subject, and my readers will no doubt have gathered that there is a branch of Japanese Art which attracts me as much as lacquer. But there is no doubt there are few artistic pursuits which can be cultivated at so small a cost, and with so much probability of its being a good investment—a goal which the collector so frequently aspires to—as that which Mr. Gilbertson has advocated. For a few pounds specimens can be obtained, the merit of which none can dispute, and which will be examples to all who see them of the pitch of perfection to which workmanship can attain; the test of familiarity and careful study will only enhance, as it shows their value—and this is the crucial test to apply to all arts, and it is one which few of the huge, expensive modern productions of Japan will submit to.

The newness of a piece of lacquer may often be certified by smelling the interior, if it be a box or suchlike. It takes many years for an object made of lac to lose its oleaginous smell if it is not exposed to the air. I have never been able to diagnose exactly the scent of old work, but there is a dryness about it which is unmistakable. It is always suspicious to find no appearance of wear on the bottom of an old box, especially at the corners. The difference in the appearance between good and bad gold can soon be distinguished; the former never, the latter soon tarnishing. It is needless to say examine the workmanship; that may be good sometimes in modern pieces, in which case they are worth having. Urushi, or raw lacquer, affects many people very seriously with a complaint termed lacquer poisoning; in mild cases it affects the skin, but in severe instances it upsets the system entirely.

The age of a piece, or rather the date beyond which it

cannot be placed, may often be approximately ascertained by studying the design. For instance, many designs can be traced to Hokusai and so cannot be more than a century old. As Mr. Anderson points out, the great majority of the decorations seen upon lacquered objects are merely copied by the draughtsmen from pictures by noted painters. Honnami Koyetsu and Koma Kiuhaku were the first to invent their own designs.

Collectors must not be disappointed if they meet with few signatures upon lacquer. The ordinance never to buy without a signature does not apply here. Large pieces are seldom signed; when they are, that fact generally tends to raise suspicion. Inros much more frequently bear the name of the maker. These are made in a variety of ways; Korin sometimes models his heavily in the body of the work, at others merely scratches it with the point of a needle in the interior. Yosei's and Zeshin's signatures are always incised. The Kajikawas painted theirs in gold lac on the lower edge, adding a sort of urn-shaped seal. But, after all, signatures should not count for much. A few hours' careful study of good pieces, under an intelligent master, countervails all this, after which, as the saying is, *il ne faut pas être grand clerc en matière d'Art* to distinguish between fine and inferior work.

CHAPTER XII.

METAL-WORK.

As to all sorts of handicrafts, they are wanting neither proper materials nor industry and application, and so far is it that they should have any occasion to send for masters abroad, that they rather exceed all other nations in ingenuity and neatness of workmanship, particularly in brass, gold, silver and copper.—*Kaempfer, 17th century.*

JAPANESE Art metal-work, as known outside Japan, consists of the following branches:—

1. *Okimono*, or ornaments to be placed on a platform: consisting either of articles used for sacred purposes—such as statuettes of deities and supernatural animals (dragons, shishi, etc.), candlesticks, incense-burners (*ko-iré*), flower-vases, gongs, and bells—or for household adornment, such as flower-vases (*hana-ike*), bowls to hold miniature gardens, incense-burners, and figures of animals (ordinarily used in the last-named capacity), such as deer, tortoises, toads, fish, crabs, etc.

2. Articles for household use, such as fire-holders (*hibachi*), mirrors (*kagami*), saké kettles (*chō-shi*), and writing-cases (*suzuri-bako*).

3. Armour, including masks, spears, and swords.

4. Articles for personal use, notably pipes (*kiseru*), pouch ornaments, beads (*ojimé*), buttons to hold the pouches in the sash, brush cases, inkstands (*yataté*), etc.

5. Cloisonné.

As regards the first of these. Sacred treasures (“*hō-motsu*,” or “precious things”) consist of the adornments of the altar, or gifts bestowed in olden times by nobles in return for the guardianship of their family tombs, or objects acquired by the priests for the ornamentation of their shrines. Although a considerable dispersal of temple treasures has surreptitiously

taken place, so much so that the government has not only prohibited their sale, but has recently catalogued them (a preliminary, no doubt, to annexing them), not many of those made of metal find their way here, probably on account of their considerable bulk and weight; those which do, consist for the most part of incense-burners, candlesticks, and flower-holders.

Household ornaments are always simple, and few in number. The temples in Japan number seventy thousand, but the houses of persons sufficiently well-to-do to possess ornaments of much artistic merit or value must always have been very much less numerous than that. It must be remembered, too, that the dwelling even of the keenest collector would not be cumbered like ours with works of Art here, there, and everywhere, but, on the contrary, would be noticeable for the simplicity and fewness of the objects set out. There might be a store in the go-down or safe, but these would never be displayed simultaneously. An incense-burner and a flower-holder would probably represent the whole of the metal ornaments in the living-room of a gentleman's house.

Metal *okimono*, properly so called, are not, to my mind, calculated to arouse much interest outside their own country, for these reasons—they are by no means invariably of elegant shape; when they represent animal forms they seldom are notable for fine or even passable modelling; the work of a few men, such as Seimin, Toün, or Joï excepted, their principal merit lies in the rare excellence of the patinas which they assume; but even this bears no comparison either in quality or variety with that which we find on the smaller articles, to which attention will presently be directed. Of course there are exceptions, but a glance at the majority of the specimens contained in our museums at South Kensington, Birmingham, and elsewhere, will show that their value is more archæological than artistic.

The metal articles contained under the second heading have already been discussed in Chapter VII., page 94.

The third class of metal-work covers a larger area than we can traverse here. The armour in which the Japanese arrayed

himself was of the most formidable and extensive character, as may be seen from the illustration on pages 30 and 85, and its makers became as skilled and noted in this as in other branches of work; but really fine specimens are seldom seen here, those which are displayed in shops being seldom other than the accoutrements of the rank and file. Spears, too, are not a subject to interest many persons, and masks will be treated of in the next chapter. There only remains, therefore, in this section the sword, but this is an article upon which a volume might be written without exhausting what is of interest concerning it.

It can readily be imagined that in a country where internal wars were constantly carried on, where private quarrels grew into family feuds, where the vendetta was unhindered by law and applauded by society, where the slightest breach of etiquette could only be repaired by the death of one or other of the parties, and where a stain of any sort upon one's character necessitated suicide with one's own weapon, attention was very early directed towards obtaining perfection in the only article of defence or offence which a Japanese carried. Nor would this article long remain unornamented in a community where artistic instincts were universal, and jewellery and other ornaments were not worn. Consequently we find attention first of all directed towards the perfection of the



No. 107.—*Muramasa Blade.* (Gilbertson Collection.)

blade, until for temper it had no rivals in the world, and many a one not only performed miraculous feats, but became imbued with such a thirst for blood that its owner was interdicted from wearing it. The most famous blade-makers were Muné-chika (tenth century), Masamuné and Yoshimitsu (thirteenth century), and Muramasa (fourteenth century). There are few of their blades which ever come to this country, but we give an engraving (No. 107) of one by the last named. The blades are made of soft, elastic, magnetic iron, combined with hard steel. The tempering is done in a charcoal furnace, the back and part of the sides being enclosed in fireclay; about a quarter of an inch remained uncovered, and the various makers made a pattern of this edge, imitating one thing and another, as, for instance, Mount Fuji, by which a connoisseur would at once recognise the maker. All good blades have these markings. Many have engraved upon them phrases in a conventional Sanscrit (Bonji), usually invocations to Fudo or some other divinity, and we often find Fudo's sword with the "tokko" handle, sometimes with the dragon coiled round it. It is said that these were the swords of persons who had adopted a religious life as "Niudo," etc. All the different processes were accompanied by ceremonial ritual: for instance, before sitting down to the final tempering, the workman donned a black cap with white strings and a white robe. The swordsmith was a far greater person than any other worker with his hands. To the successful maker's name were added one of the honorary suffixes *suké* or *kami*, which were official titles. "Hogen," when applied, meant "expert" (not baronet, as has been alleged), and Ko-hogen, "expert in ancient matters." It was an honorific used by the sacerdotal class, in which painters were included in feudal days. But the artist never by the receipt of these titles ceased to be an artisan, or obtained social or official recognition, as is accorded to him in the West, save in the form of a pension.

The furniture of the sword and its ornamentation is a study of the most varied kind, and one which, if taken up, is certain to interest in an ever-increasing manner. At present there

are but few who have occupied themselves with it, and therefore I propose to state shortly why I consider that it should enlist the sympathies of a larger class.

Personal ornaments illustrate better than anything else the individuality of their wearer, and collectively the sense of the nation. Especially is this the case where the article in question is worn as a privilege, is regarded with deference, is handed down as an heirloom, and is the subject of the most carefully prescribed etiquette.*

Not only the manufacture but the adornment of the sword has for centuries been a profession adopted by artists of the highest attainments, who have spared nothing to render it an article of the highest artistic value. The ornament lavished upon it illustrates the religious and civil life,

* For details as to this see Griffis's "Mikado's Empire," page 222.



No. 108.—A Pair of Swords. (W. J. Stuart's Collection.)

the history, the heroism, the folk-lore, the manners and customs of the people, the physical aspect and natural history of the country. These have been executed in every variety of metal, so that a fresh and distinct interest attaches on this account. The subjects are so varied that it is seldom one finds two alike, unless made for a pair of swords. This variety often lets new light into a story or legend, from the artists different interpretations of it. Careful selection and systematic arrangement increase both interest and value. The illustrations are portable in size; like all the best work of the nation they are diminutive, and five hundred of them can go into a coin cabinet. They are at present reasonable in price. A few shillings will often purchase a piece of workmanship so marvellous that London and Parisian jewellers admit they could not imitate it at any price. At the Londesborough sale swords and daggers with no greater artistic wealth than these possessed fetched hundreds of pounds.

The time may be long in coming when Japanese arms will realise such prices, but now that their use is abolished and their makers have ceased to be, they must have an increasing value.

Lesser advantages are that they are not breakable, and that they improve invariably in appearance when they reach home and have been subjected to careful cleaning.

To these reasons might be added that the curiosity-hunter is just now in sad straits for want of a new hunting-ground. With every civilised nation on the alert, and as eagerly disposed to join the chase as the old country, it is not surprising that the ground is getting cleared, that hunting the old game is far too expensive, and that he who would spring fresh must go far afield.

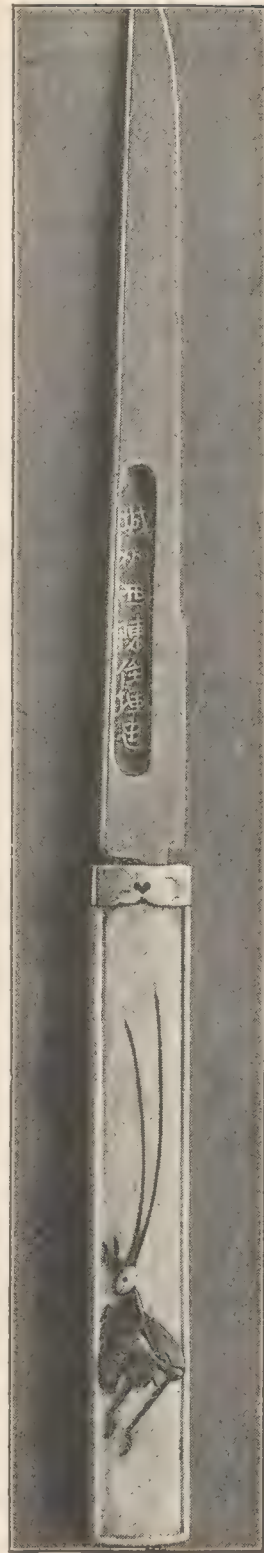
The wearing of the sword, the precious possession of lord and vassal, "the soul of the Samurai," was, as I have stated, a privilege which only those of a certain rank were entitled to. In the time of the Ashikagas (sixteenth century), the fashion of wearing two swords, one (*katana*) about three feet in length for offence and defence, and another (*chisa-katana* or *wakizashi*), from ten or twelve to about twenty-three inches,

for the "happy dispatch" (*seppuku* or *hara kiri*) came into vogue. There were also the *ken*, straight and usually two-edged; the *tachi* or slung-sword; the *tanto* or short sword; the sacred *hoken*, leaf-shaped; the *aikuchi*, or dirk without a guard, worn by doctors and inferior officials; the *jintachi*, or two-handed war-sword; and the *mamori* or stiletto. In full dress the colour of the scabbard was black with a tinge of green and red, and so it varied as occasion required, thus giving employment to the lacquerers.* In the pair of swords here illustrated (No. 108), the scabbards are of so-called shark-skin (*samé*), filled in with black lac, but it is really the skin of a species of ray, the *Rhinobatus armatus*, and is used for covering the hilt of the sword. Tiger-skin was sometimes used as a covering for the sword. I have come across one bag of this material. The taste of the wearer was displayed in the colours, size, and method of wearing his weapon. "Daimios often spent extravagant sums upon a single sword, and small fortunes upon a collection. A Samurai, however poor, would have a blade of sure temper and rich mountings, deeming it honourable to suffer for food that he might have a worthy emblem of his rank."†

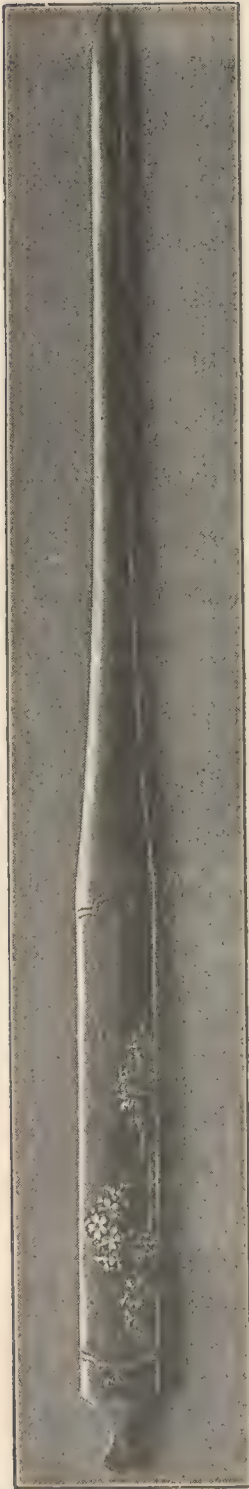
Upon a child being presented at his birth at the temple of his father's par-

* Some of the finest lacquer to be met with will be found upon the sword sheaths. The variety, too, is remarkable.

† Griffis's "Mikado's Empire," page 225.



No. 109.—Ivory kodzuka; blade by Umétada Nishijini (fifteenth century). (Author's Collection.)



No. 110.—*Kogatana*.
(*Author's Collection*.)

ticular deity he received, if a boy, two fans amongst other gifts.* These were harbingers of the swords he would ultimately wear. At the age of three a sword belt was girded round his waist; at seven, if a Samurai, he wore two swords suited to his size and indicative of his rank; at fifteen these were exchanged for the swords he carried throughout life, and handed down unsullied to his heir.†

The wearing of swords was abolished on the 1st January, 1877, and this "strangely docile people obeyed the edict without a blow being struck, and the curio shops at once displayed heaps of swords which, a few months before, the owners would less willingly have parted with than with life itself."‡ Naturally, this act on the part of two million of people glutted the markets with swords of every description, but the fine specimens quickly found purchasers, and every day they are becoming scarcer.

The other important pieces of a sword besides the blade and scabbard are :

The *tsuba* or guard, usually a flat piece of metal, circular or oval in form, which is perforated by a triangular aperture for the transmission of the blade. At either side are one or more openings for the lodgment of the tops of two accessory implements

* A girl receives a cake of pomade, which should bring good looks; both receive flax thread in hope of longevity.

† New Year's Day is the birthday of every Japanese; no matter upon what day they are born, they are considered to be one year old on the ensuing New Year's Day.

‡ Chamberlain's "Things Japanese," p. 239.

called the *kodzuka* and *kogai*. These openings are often found closed up with metal, indicating that the guard has been adapted to a different sword to that for which it was made.

The *kodzuka* (Illustration No. 109) is the handle of a short dagger (*ko-katana*) which fits into one side of the scabbard of the *wakizashi* or dagger, but never on that of the large sword. The *kodzuka* and blade in the Illustration (No. 109) do not belong to one another. The former is of ivory, with the grasshopper in mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell, and dates from the last century; the blade is one of Umetada



No. 111.—*Fuchi-kashira*. (Author's Collection.)

Nishi-jiu of Jōshiu, and bears his signature in inlaid gold: it was made in the sixteenth century. The *kogai* (Illustration No. 110) is a skewer inserted on the other side of the scabbard, and which, it is said, was left by its possessor in the body of an adversary killed in battle, as a card of ownership. *Kogai* are not found in all swords, and are not met with in any numbers; they are usually made of a malleable material, and ornamented similarly to the *kodzuka*.

The *menuki* are small ornaments placed on either side of the hilt to give a better grasp to it. They are also used to ornament the scabbard, especially on the *wakizashi* or short

swords, and on daggers. Imitations of *menuki* find a place in almost every curio shop, but they can usually be detected by their being either cast or rolled out of common metal. No one should buy these or similar things without first handling and examining with a glass some really good ones. There is generally a signature to be found on old specimens.

The *kashira* is the pommel or cap of metal which fits on to the head of the handle, being secured to its place by a cord passed through two lateral eyes. The *fuchi* is an oval ring of metal which encircles the base of the handle, and through its centre the blade passes. The *fuchi* and *kashira* were always made by the same artist, who usually signed his name in the underside of the former. The first of the Illustrations, Nos. 111 and 112 shows the story of Watanabé killing the Demon Spider; and the story is on both parts. The bases of this *fuchi* and *kashira* are iron, the spider is in copper, Watanabé is in *shakudo*, etc., with gold inlay and silver sword. The second pair illustrates the Mikado's carriage covered with cherry blossom on the occasion of a fête; here each flower is cut from solid silver, the carriage is in gold, the base iron. The third pair is gold wire inlaid in iron. In the fourth the birds, branches, etc., are carved in relief out of iron. Now these marvels of workmanship, for they are nothing else, are only samples out of hundreds, each of which may be relied upon to furnish the same variety and excellence. They have only been selected because they lent themselves to reproduction. Why then do they fail to attract the attention of collectors? A leading London goldsmith, on being shown them, said that similar work *might* be copied here, but he dare not say at what cost, yet for the moment, if care be exercised in the selection, equally good specimens to those illustrated may be obtained here at a sovereign each.*

The *kurikata* is a cleat through which the *sagewo* (or cord for holding back the sleeves whilst fighting) passes, and the *kojiri* is the metal end to the scabbard.

* A word of caution. Dealers usually try to make one buy these and similar things in lots. Don't. Rather pay a much higher price for the option of selecting.

In the chapters which have preceded this, many of the illustrations have been taken from *tsubas* and *kodzukas*. *Tsubas* will be found on pages 12, 15, 16, 43, 47, 50, 51, 52, 71, 77, 141; and *kodzukas* on pages 1, 5, 23, 28, 55, 123 and 124.

No idea of the artistic value of sword furniture can be gained from the swords which one meets with by scores in every shop. This rubbish, for it is nothing else, consists of the weapons which were discarded upon the adoption of European uniforms, and a hunt through hundreds of them will hardly repay the trouble incurred of washing one's hands.



No. 112.—*Fuchi-kashira*. (*Author's Collection.*)

It goes without saying that these cast-offs have been carefully scrutinised before they left their native land. For some reason, which I have not been able to ascertain, almost all the best guards and other appurtenances of the sword come over here in a detached state; very few fine swords make their appearance, but a quantity of most elaborately ornamented specimens. The origin of these is mysterious; they look very much like creations for the outside market; if they are not, they evidence a debased period of Art. It is curious that the decorations of many of the swords are taken from marine sub-

jects; for instance, a lobster in metal will form the kojiri or ferrule at the bottom of the sheath, the lacquer sheath will have lumps of coral let into it, and all the metal ornaments will have representations of coral-divers, or fish, or seaweed. There was no Imperial navy whose officers could have required so many swords—why this adornment then?

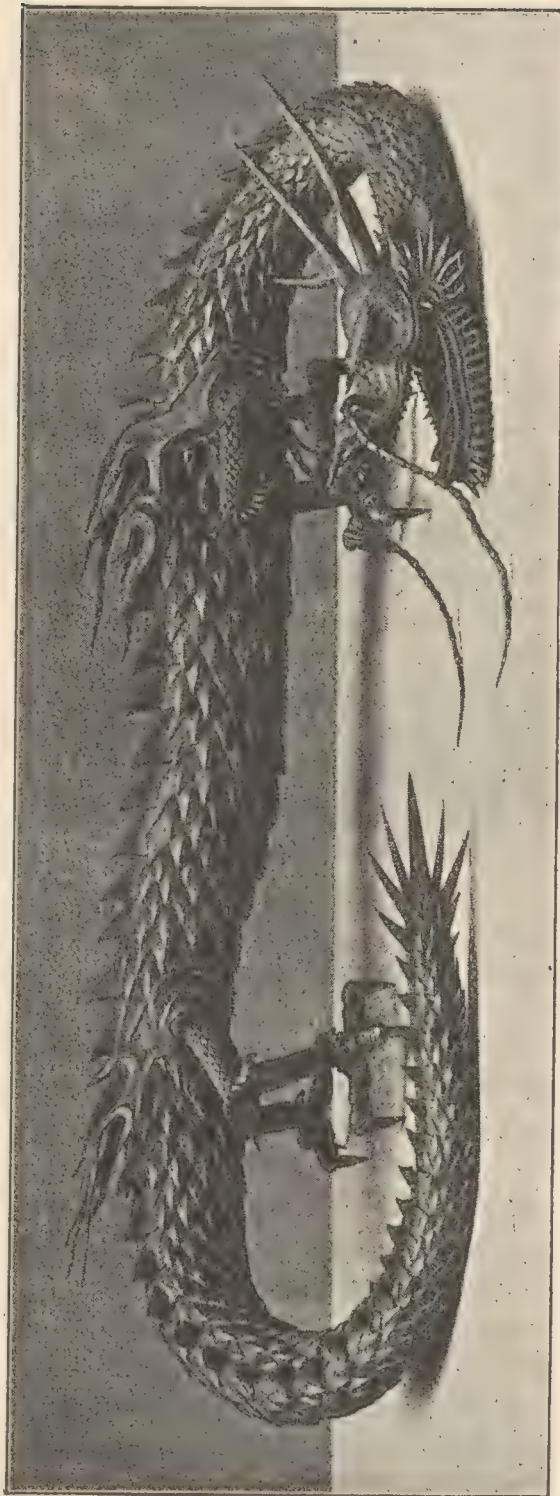
Foreigners have much difficulty in obtaining information about Japanese metal-workers of the past. There is a work, *So-ken Ki-sho*, published in 1781, which gives biographies of the most noted, and which Captain Brinkley has had translated, but he considers it of little value. Fortunately in metal, even more readily than in lac, a good eye and a certain amount of experience will enable a distinction to be made as to what should be acquired and what shunned.

The earliest name in connection with artistic work which my readers are likely to come across specimens of is Kanaiyé, a master who lived at the end of the fifteenth century. Doubtless many of the pieces in the market are merely copies of the old originals, still it is quite possible to acquire examples which have some likelihood to be genuine. The same may be said of the work of his immediate follower Nobuiyé.

The Miochin family, which date back in continuous record to the twelfth century, have received constantly recurring marks of royal favour in testimony of the excellence of their work. They were great armourers, but they also showed their skill in other ways, as, for instance, in the eagle in the South Kensington Museum and the sixteenth-century dragon (Illustration No. 113). The sword furniture which is usually met with is rarely by Miochins of earlier date than the fifteenth century, and is more usually of the seventeenth and eighteenth.

In the fifteenth century appeared the Gotō family, whose work is held in the highest estimation in Japan; it has too much sameness and academic style to please those who enjoy the work of artists who deal with the subject with freer and

larger aims, but it exhibits finer workmanship than any other school. The founder of the house, Gotō Yūjō, lived in the fifteenth century (1440—1512), and was named after the renowned Shōgun, Yoshimasa Yūjō. His descendants were allowed to add the “jo” to their names, and were made official chasers, not only by the Ashikagas, but after their fall, by Hidéyoshi, Iyéyasu, and the Tokugawas. As Mr. Hayashi remarks in his “Catalogue of Artists,” the house being attached to the Shōgunate always produced works of the highest quality, and retained its traditional renown, its successors being selected, not in direct descent, but from those who showed the greatest talent.



No. 113.—Dragon, by Miochin.

In 1603 the house of Yūjō moved with the Shōgun Iyēyasu to Yedo, where their descendants worked until the present century. A branch of the house remained at Kyōto, and were consequently known as the Kio-Gotōs. The Gotōs were especially noted for their work in nanakoji* on shakudo. It requires some experience to distinguish between fine and inferior work in nanakoji; a magnifying glass will, however, show the perfect regularity and shape of the small dots in good work. During the lifetime of the earlier members of the family, tsubas were usually of hard-tempered iron, and consequently not suitable to their delicate work. We find some of the best examples of the Gotōs upon kodzukas and fuchi-kashiras, but in these instances it is not earlier than the seventeenth century. One of the requisites in a Japanese connoisseur's education is to recognise the iyebori of the thirteen generations of Gotōs.

With the sixteenth century piercing and chasing, and in rare instances inlaying and damascening, came into vogue with tsuba-makers. A great name in connection with this change was Metada (or Umé-tada). The work still continued as a rule to be marked by an absence of extraneous ornament in the shape of gold, silver, or alloys; but it was ornamented in the case of Umé-tada by a free use of the graver. Umé-tada has been called "the master of masters;" but his name has been used by a number of men of later date and inferior calibre. The blade to the kodzuka (Illustration 109) is signed in inlaid gold by Umé-tada Nishijiu.

With the close of the sixteenth century the period of constant wars was drawing to an end, and the country was on the eve of an era of peace which lasted for two hundred and fifty years; the sword-guard, which in former times was of no service unless it was of a toughness sufficient to withstand the whole force of a blow dealt with a two-handed sword, was now adapted for court use and the adornment of the person. Consequently we see from this time onwards an increasing change in the character of the metal used and the ornamenta-

* Nanakoji, so called from its resemblance to fish roe, is produced by punching the surface into a texture of small dots.

tion employed, and we find in the ateliers at Osaka damascenings of gold and silver in the iron, the son of Kanéiyé encrusting his work with copper, and translucent enamels being introduced by Hirata Dōnin. Kinai, whose elegant pierced tsubas elicit the admiration of everybody, was also working (Illustration No. 114). His style was followed by a great number of followers.



No. 114.—*Tsuba, by Kinai. (Gilbertson Collection.)*

The close of the seventeenth century was notable for the rise of the three schools of Nara, Yokoya, and Omori, all offshoots from the Gotō. The Nara school took its name from Nara Toshitēru, and attracted to itself upon its foundation a number of artists whose works have ever since been sought for by connoisseurs—namely, Nara Toshinaga (1667—1736), Yasuchika (1670—1744), Hamano Shōzui (1697—1769), and Joī (17 —1761). Of these Shōzui appears to have had the

largest number of followers, amongst them being Chokuzui, Kunichika, Kuarakusai, Juzui, Hozui, Kuzui, and Kozui. The school was a revolutionary one, and started, as did those of Yokoya and Hamano, as a protest against the academic style of the Gotōs.

The school of Yokoya—named after its founder Sōmin (1670—1733), whose family name was Yokoya—arose about the same time. The real founder appears to have been Soyo,



No. 115.—*Tsuba*, by Sōmin. (Gilbertson Collection.)

and Sōmin's successors were Omori Terumasa (1705—1772), who joined hands with the Omori school, which included his nephew Teruhidé (1730—1798). We give a tsuba of silvered copper by Sōmin; his works are rare (M. Gonse mentions only four in the Paris collections). What the style developed to in the hands of his follower Konkwan (1743—1800), may be seen in the tsuba of Narahira contemplating Fuji, at page 7.

The Omori School was founded by Shigēmitsu (1693—1725)

and produced Soten, noted for his pierced and damascened tsubas with subjects of battle scenes. Teruhidé, known for his modelling of waves and imitation of aventurine, may be classed in this school, as in that of Yokoya. Besides this may be mentioned the schools of Ishiguro (Yedo), with Masatsuné (1760—1828), Masayoshi and Shinzui (1789—1842), and Hosono, of the early part of this century, whose flat, incised work is remarkable for the introduction of coloured surfaces. All the foremost artists in these Schools displayed originality, but they each and all worked in varied styles, most of them showing traces of Gotō influence.

The English and French authorities differ widely in their catalogues of the most noted artists in metal; it may be well, therefore, to conclude this summary with the notice of the more modern men as given by M. Gonse.

“What a galaxy of masters illuminated the close of the eighteenth century! What a multitude of names and works would have to be cited in any attempt to write a monograph upon sword furniture! The humblest artisan, in this universal outburst of Art, is superior, in his mastery of the metals, to any one we could name in Europe. How many artists worthy of a place in the rank are only known to us by a single piece, but which is quite sufficient to evidence their power! From 1780 to 1840 the art was at fever heat, the creative faculty produced marvels. Tomoyoshi, Nagatsuné, Masanori, Fusamasa, Takanori, Munémitsu, Joï, Munenori, Kadzunori, Séidzui, Toshihiro, Tomonobu, Terutsugu, Masayoshi, Teïkan, Kadzutomu, Masatsuné, Masafusa, Ossatsuné, Yoshihidé, Yoshitsugu, Morichika, Yasuyuki, Yasuchika, Haruakira, Ekijio, Nobuyoshi, Toshimasa, Hirosada, Katsuki, Natsuo, all practised the art with consummate ability during this period.”

The last-named of these, Kano Natsuo, is still alive, and has attained to great celebrity. His shakudo has never been surpassed. He was recently entrusted with the mounting of a blade by Bizen Sanemori for the Emperor, at a cost of 1,700 yen.

The decoration of the sword furniture showed symptoms of decline early in the present century. Working in hard

wrought iron was first of all shirked, and similar effects were endeavoured to be produced by castings; then the decoration ran riot and transgressed all limits, so that many of the pieces made between 1840—1870 could never have been used for the purposes for which they were professedly intended; such products are remarkable in a way, as showing the lengths to



No. 116.—*Jug of Mokumé, by Tiffany & Co., of New York.*

which elaboration may be carried, but they can never stand for a day beside the dignified workmanship of an earlier date.

Imitations of sword guards are sometimes imported into the market. These are cast from old specimens, and can usually be detected by holding them at the point of one's finger and hitting them sharply with another piece of metal, when they will emit a dull sound only, whereas a fine old guard will ring

like the best bell-metal. It is well to test all guards in this way, but it must be recollected that guards with much piercing will not ring, and that many of those made since the beginning of



No. 117.—Vase of Mokumé, by Tiffany & Co., of New York.

this century are of such malleable iron as not to stand the test.

It is a question which has not yet been solved whether some of the old guards may not be castings, even some of those

which are chased. The difference between wrought and cast iron is that the latter contains from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 per cent. of carbon, the former hardly any; but it is possible to anneal or toughen cast iron by a process known as cementation, that is, by a surface removal of carbon. Many of the guards are covered with oxide of iron, to which they owe much of their beauty.

As I have already mentioned, one of the principal factors which should give to Japanese metal-work an interest is the variety of material which is introduced, and the remarkable way in which it is treated. And yet this unique factor is altogether overlooked by the many who only glance at the subject, although it is not a difficult matter to understand or appreciate. Professor Brinckmann,* who is one of the few directors of museums who have as yet seen the advantage of recognising Japanese Art, has acquired, at a small cost, in Hamburg, no less than 1,200 specimens of sword-guards, and these he has arranged according to subject, metal, and design. He considers that they are of more use if they illustrate, as they do, the manner and customs of the country, the various metals employed, and the versatility of design, than if they are classified according to the men who made them.

The value of Japanese alloys in metal-work to our manufacturers has been shown in a paper by Professor Roberts-Austen, and from it I am enabled to take the following particulars respecting shakudo and shibuichi, which are the principal alloys used. Analyses show that the former usually consists of about 95 per cent. of copper, $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 of gold, 1 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ of silver, and traces of lead, iron, and arsenic. The latter contains from 50 to 67 per cent. of copper, from 30 to 50 of silver, with traces of gold and iron.† The precious metals

* He informs me that the advantages to the trade of his city through his Japanese section have been remarkable. A new and prosperous industry has sprung up which is directly traceable to it, and a Hamburg firm carried off a contract for the furnishing of the Mikado's palace against all Europe, owing to their having the means at hand of ascertaining what that potentate's preconceived notions and requirements would be.

† The derivation of the name shibuichi is "one-fourth," which is clearly incorrect.

are here sacrificed in order to produce definite results; in the case of shakudo, the gold enabling the metal to receive a rich purple coat, or *patina*, as it is called, when subjected to certain pickling solutions; in that of shibuichi, the alloy forcing the metal to assume a beautiful silver-grey tint under the ordinary atmospheric influences. It is one or other of these influences which gives the patina to all Japanese metals, and it is understood by that nation in a way which no other has yet arrived at. A worn-out patina will often re-assert itself by the aid of much handling, the moisture of the skin being all that is required. This shows the acuteness of the producer in forming his alloy so that the formation of the patina should be assisted by a treatment which an article in everyday use is sure to obtain.

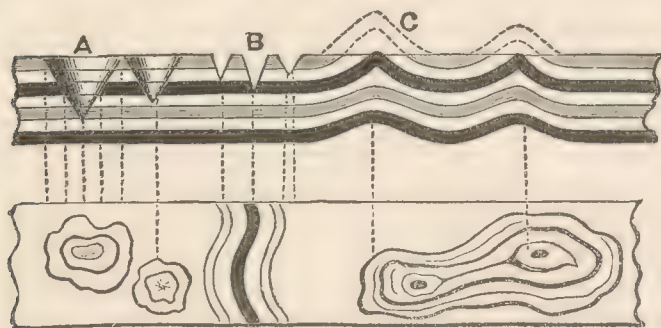
The three commonest pickles are said by Professor Roberts-Austen to be made up as follows, and are used boiling:

	No. 1.	No. 2.	No. 3.
Verdigris	438 grains	87 grains	220 grains
Sulph. of Copper	292 „	437 „	540 „
Nitre	—	87 „	—
Common Salt	—	146 „	—
Sulphur	—	233 „	—
Water	1 gallon	—	1 gallon
Vinegar	—	1 gallon	5 fluid drachms

As a perfect patina is one of the essential qualities of the article, care must be taken that it does not lose it. Collectors will do well to remember this when cleaning their metal-work; I thought to improve some of my earliest acquisitions by rubbing them with a German paste; the result was disastrous, as it removed the patina instantly. A collection of such ornaments was spoilt in an hour by ignorantly polishing with plate powder. The metal in all fine Japanese work is so good that it seldom requires more than a chamois leather to bring out all its qualities, and even this it is not advisable to use very often. Upon bringing purchases of metal-work home it is best to scrub them with a soft nail-brush in warm water

and soap; thoroughly rinse afterwards in clean water, dry before fire and rub with leather. Where rust has taken hold of guards the following course is adopted by Professor Church: Boil or soak in strong solution of caustic potash; thoroughly wash, and remove rust by brushing in water; when dry rub with linseed oil: after three days wipe off oil and scrub with hard brush. N.B.—This does not apply to inlaid guards.

An alloy* which gives a yellow bronze appearance of a soft and luminous hue is called *sentoku*, from the Chinese period (1426—1435) in which it is understood that this amalgam was discovered. The Japanese also term copper which has turned green *sei-do*, and yellow bronze with iron and a trace of tin, *kodo*.



No. 118.—Method of manufacture of Mokumé.

There is another Art material to be met with occasionally to which Professor Roberts-Austen directed the attention of the

Birmingham manufacturers in the hope that it might be taken up by them. They have not, however, done so, and it has remained for Messrs. Tiffany of New York to produce some remarkable results in this way (see Illustrations Nos. 116 and 117). This is *mokumé* or wood-grain, and it is rarely met with even in Japan, for after several years collecting I have only succeeded in obtaining about a score of small pieces; since, however, I drew attention to it in the first edition of this work a good deal more has been made, some of it being only an imitation. The Diagrams Nos. 118 and 120 show the method of the manufacture of *mokumé*. Thin sheets of alloys are soldered together, care being taken that the metals which present diversity of colour come together. Conical holes (A)

* Copper 72·32, tin 8·126, lead 6·217, zinc 13·102, nickel ·065.

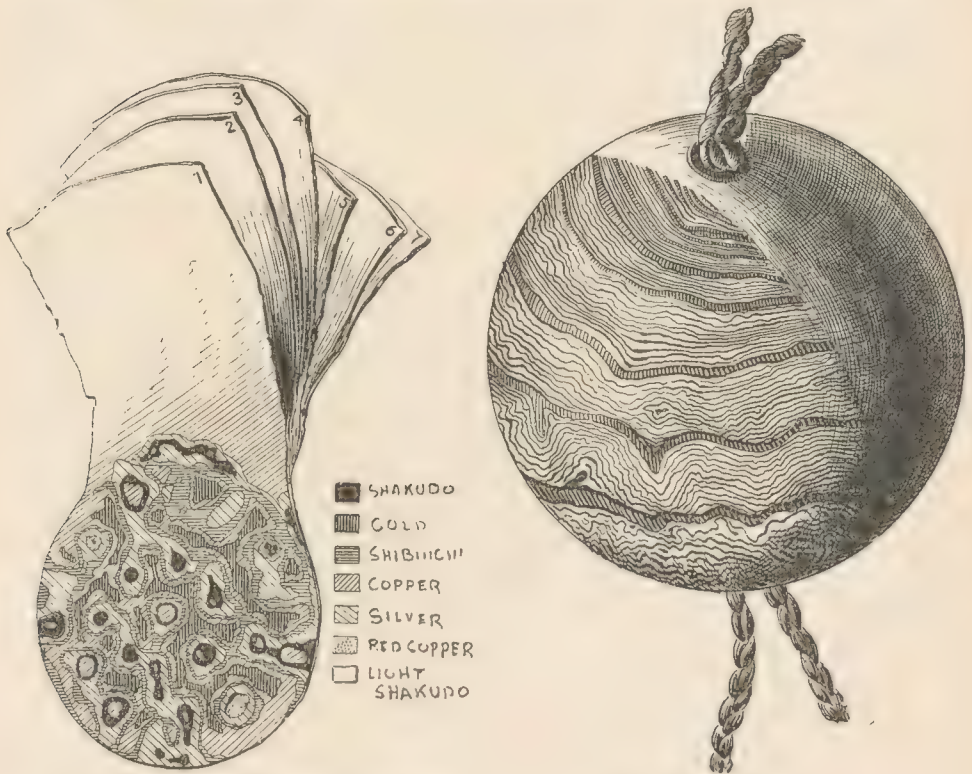
of varying depth are then drilled in the mass or trench-like cuts (B). The mass is then hammered until the holes disappear, and are replaced by banded circles or lines (see Illustration No. 120); similar effects may be produced by making depressions in the back with blunted tools, so as to produce prominences (c), which are then filed down, and produce complicated sections, as shown in the lower part of the diagram, and as in the bead (Illustration No. 121). The colours of the alloys may of course be developed by pickling. There is yet another variation of this where the sheets of alloy are merely welded together and then cut through, so as to imitate guri-lac, which it does most effectually. I have two swords, besides kodzukas which might at first be mistaken for lacquer, so perfectly is the resemblance counterfeited, even to the patina upon the surface. Mokumé, like everything else, is imitated in Japan, but in a remarkably clever way, the various colours being japanned on to the surface; it can be detected by scraping the edge where the strata of the metals should be visible. The imitation must be almost as troublesome to produce as the original. It is possible that it may on this account not be fraudulent.



No. 119. — *A Mokumé fuchi.*

Professor Roberts-Austen has succeeded in reproducing mokumé and every Japanese patina which he has met with excepting that known as "lobster" red, which Messrs. Tiffany have, however, obtained. He is of opinion that many of the happiest effects in Japanese work have been the result of chance, an artificer becoming possessed of a mass of copper which, owing to the presence of certain impurities (of the nature of which he was unaware), took a wonderful patina. His use of any individual metal was never anything else than a sparing one, and therefore it can easily be understood that if this mass was, fortunately for him, of some size, it might

almost last him a lifetime. Since he mentioned this to me I have seen the probability of it demonstrated in various ways. For instance, in the Illustration No. 122 the pan of the hibachi carried by the servant is a wonderful piece of lobster-red, but it is not more than an eighth of an inch square. In the companion piece, which represents a gentleman and his servant, the lobster-red is used to a still smaller extent, namely, on the sword-hilt. This brings me to another matter, which the Professor



No. 120.—Illustration of method of blending alloys.

No. 121.—Bead.
Actual diameter $\frac{3}{4}$ inch.

emphasizes as a principal trait in Japanese metal-work, and one which our manufacturers should imitate, namely, its "extreme simplicity." The brilliant metals, gold and silver, are used most sparingly, only for enrichment, and to heighten the general effect; the precious metals are only employed where their presence will serve some definite end in relation to the design as a whole. What would one of their great masters think of some of our supreme efforts in this line—a silver stag, for

instance, a yard high, given as one of her Majesty's prizes at Ascot, which never could be even endurable until it tarnishes?

The various styles of ornamenting metal are as follows:—

(1) *Zogan*: which includes both damascening and inlaying, is of two kinds, *hon-zogan* and *nuno-me-zogan*.

Hon-zogan is where the lines are cut of equal depth, but are made wider at the bottom than the top, as in etching by acid. This undercutting is in order to retain the inlay which is hammered in, and not only completely fills the furrow but usually projects beyond it. If the inlay is left in relief it is called *taka-zogan*, if it is cut level with the surface *hira-zogan*.

Nuno-me-zogan, which derives its name from having in early days had the grooves in-



No. 122.—*Kanemoto*. (Author's Collection.)

cised of a pattern resembling linen mesh, is also of various kinds. In its ruder form the lines are merely cut or scratched, and a leaf of metal is beaten into them and the surface polished. This process is easier and more rapid than hon-

zogan, but, of course, not so lasting. It has been practised since the eighth century, and has been applied to cast as well as wrought iron.

(2) *Ke-bori* and *Kata-kiri*, or engraving on metal.

In *Ke-bori* the lines are cut, as in our engraving, very finely and usually of equal depth and width, the word signifying "hair cutting."

In *Kata-kiri* the graver is used as a painter would a brush, and the lines vary in thickness and depth, the effect being produced in a great measure by light and shade on the sides. It is the most artistic and consequently the most esteemed of all the processes. Illustration No. 22 is an example.

(3) *Niku-bori*, or carving in relief; which divides itself into *usu-niku-bori*, or low relief, and *taka-bori*, or high relief.

(4) *Uchi-dashi*, or repoussé, which is often combined with *niku-bori*.

The background of Japanese metal-work is often as remarkable as any part of it. The artist seldom omits to treat it in a way which adds to the decoration and to his labour. He does not hesitate to attempt a misty twilight, a night effect, or an imitation of wood or leather, and it is needless to say he succeeds. One thing only he usually avoids, and that is the bright polish which Western nations esteem so highly. Glitter and garishness are not in his line.

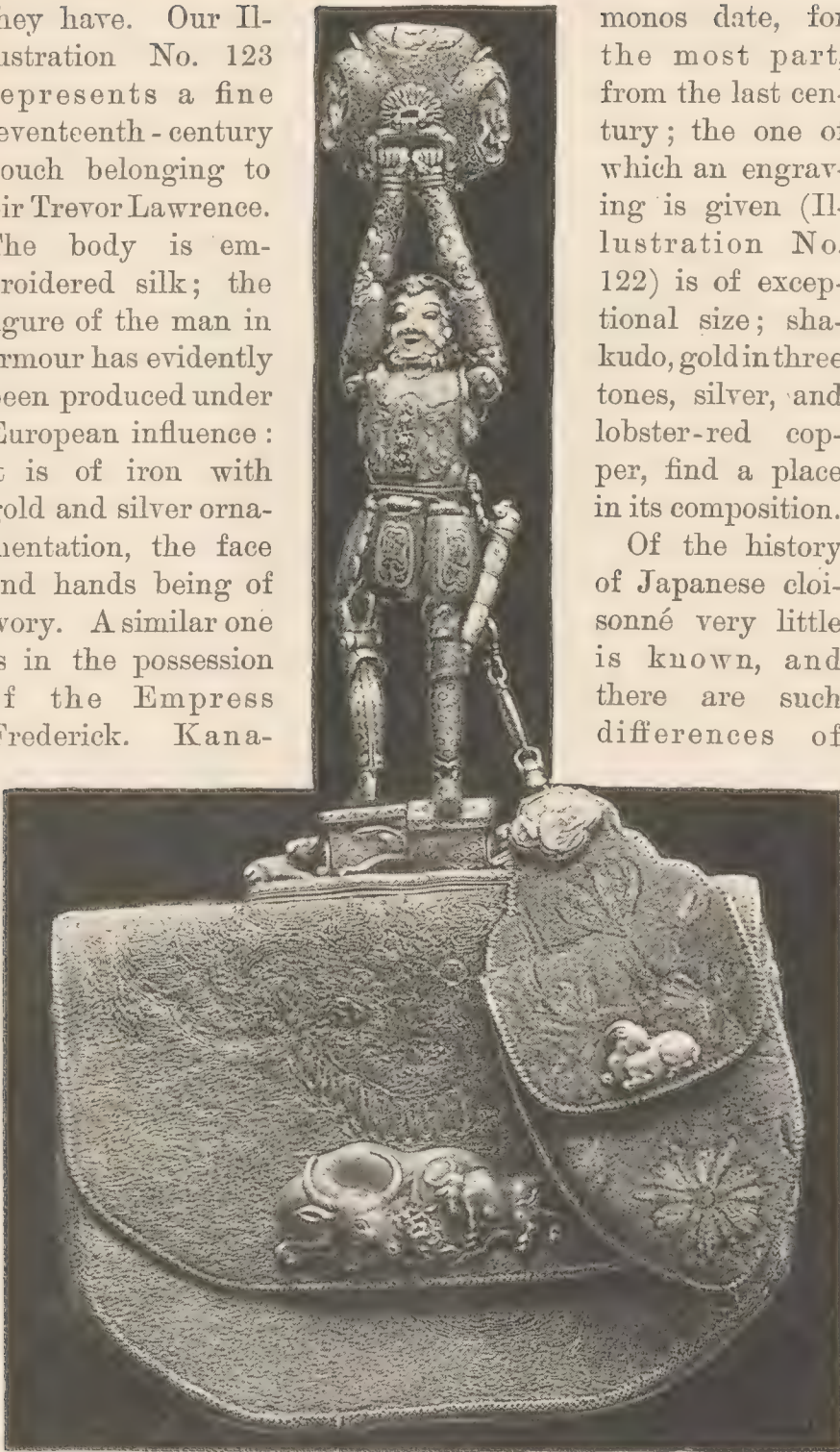
Besides sword furniture, the artists in metal have occupied themselves with a variety of articles, all of which testify to their exceeding ability with the graver. Pipes, hair-pins, ink-pots,* brush-holders, perfume-boxes, but, above all, the clasps (*kanamonos*) and beads of their tobacco pouches and the buttons (*kagami buta*) appertaining thereto. One must not judge of these from the miserable castings which are usually offered in curio shops; they do not often appear in the market now, although at one time they must have been fairly plentiful for the French collectors to amass such specimens as

* For writing, a brush, a stick of what we call Indian ink, and a roll of paper made from the paper mulberry are used. These are carried on the person; the roll in the breast, the brush and inkstand in a case suspended from the girdle.

they have. Our Illustration No. 123 represents a fine seventeenth-century pouch belonging to Sir Trevor Lawrence. The body is embroidered silk; the figure of the man in armour has evidently been produced under European influence: it is of iron with gold and silver ornamentation, the face and hands being of ivory. A similar one is in the possession of the Empress Frederick. Kana-

monos date, for the most part, from the last century; the one of which an engraving is given (Illustration No. 122) is of exceptional size; shakudo, gold in three tones, silver, and lobster-red copper, find a place in its composition.

Of the history of Japanese cloisonné very little is known, and there are such differences of



No. 123.—Pouch. Seventeenth Century. (Sir Trevor Lawrence Collection.)

opinion concerning it amongst professed experts that I shall not venture to touch upon it here. It is one of the few



No. 124.—*Iron Vase, by Komai.* (*Author's Collection.*)

branches of Art in which the country has shown no deterioration; in fact, some of the pieces being produced to-day are

marvels such as the world has never seen before. But it has passed almost out of the range of metal-work, and now belongs mainly to the department of ceramics.

These notes cannot be closed without reference to an artist, Komai, who has produced masterpieces of damascening in gold (Illustration No. 124). Unfortunately many of the best are marred by the ugliness of their shape, which shows that they date from a period of decadence. They command a high price, but not too high when the labour expended upon them is taken into consideration.

The translation of signatures upon lacquer, metal-work, or what not, is difficult and perplexing. More especially is this the case where, as often happens, the Japanese translator has a paucity of knowledge as to artists' names—not infrequently the same symbol may have two meanings, or the artist may have adopted a *nom de plume*, and in that case some quite unrecognisable name will be the result.

CHAPTER XIII.

SCULPTURE IN WOOD AND IVORY.



No. 125.—*Boy in a Karashishi
Mask. Netsuké.
(Gilbertson Collection.)*

GLYPTIC Art in Japan, like many other branches of our subject with which we have had to do, was born, fostered, and nourished in the service of religion. Ornamentation was an inherent part of the Buddhist creed, its shrines were decorated from end to end, and the necessity for idols and images, in every variety of material, not only for the temple but the home, gave occupation to a large body of artists, who, by an unwritten

law, were enlisted from the higher grades of society.

Mr. W. Anderson compiled for the introduction to the first edition of Murray's "Handbook to Japan" a concise account of the Art of Sculpture, which contains all that is at present known to the outside world on the subject. It is with some diffidence that one ventures to question his inference that Japan sculptors fell much below the Indian, Chinese, and Korean models from which they derived their ideas. So far as can be judged from the limited number of examples which, either in their original state or by means of photography come under the view of Europeans, the Japanese appears to

have divested these prototypes of a southern sensuousness and invested them with dignity, grace, and (where permissible) vitality. In this respect the sculptor acted in marked contrast to his brother who handled the brush only, and who, as we have shown, never allowed himself to diverge the breadth of a line from the track which hundreds of his predecessors had so slavishly followed. It is a fair argu-



No. 126.—Statuette of *Ikkin-oshō*. (C. H. Read Collection.)

ment that a race of sculptors, which has created such veritable works of glyptic art as *netsukés*, must have been capable of producing, and must have produced, works of greater merit than the lifeless, effete objects which are the *chefs-d'œuvre* of their foreign tutors. It is not perhaps a complete test to ask the reader to decide the question from a comparison of the illustrations in the chapters on Chinese

and Japanese sculpture in the volumes of the "Bibliothèque de l'Enseignement des Beaux-Arts" (Paris: Quantin), but if he does there cannot be a doubt as to which shows the highest standard of excellence.

As we have said, sculpture in Japan originated in the service of religion, and the only examples of any size, until a comparatively modern date, which come under our notice in this country, are those which partake of that character. Principal among these are shrines and figures of deities. Few date back beyond the sixteenth century. To that epoch the lacquered statuette of Ikkiu-osho, a Buddhist priest (Illustration No. 126), belongs; I may cite this as an example showing a nobility of pose and an individuality seldom met with in any Chinese or Indian work.

The images of deities are for the most part of the seventeenth century, as in 1614 an edict was issued by Hidétada that every house should contain one, and this must have given a considerable impetus to their creation, for the mere force of example would probably induce the majority of believers to discard their old idol for a new one. Many of the shrine cases, too, in which they are enclosed testify by their metal ornamentation to the hands of the Gotos having been employed upon them.

This compulsory edict may have been indirectly the cause of the netsuké taking its present shape. In this wise: it was the introduction of tobacco, some time in the sixteenth century, which (as I shall show later on) largely added to its fabrication. The edict above referred to must have created a numerous body of craftsmen, who it is probable were not many years in supplying a demand which once met would not be constant. Now, nothing is more likely than they should, perhaps at first in their leisure moments, and afterwards through lack of work, ornament the piece of wood or metal which had hitherto done duty as a netsuké to the tobacco-pouch hanging at their girdle. The Japanese never allows anything with which he has to do to go long unornamented, and therefore it was a matter of course that sooner or later this article should receive attention at the decorator's



No. 127.—*Ivory Intro.* (*Seymour Trower Collection.*)

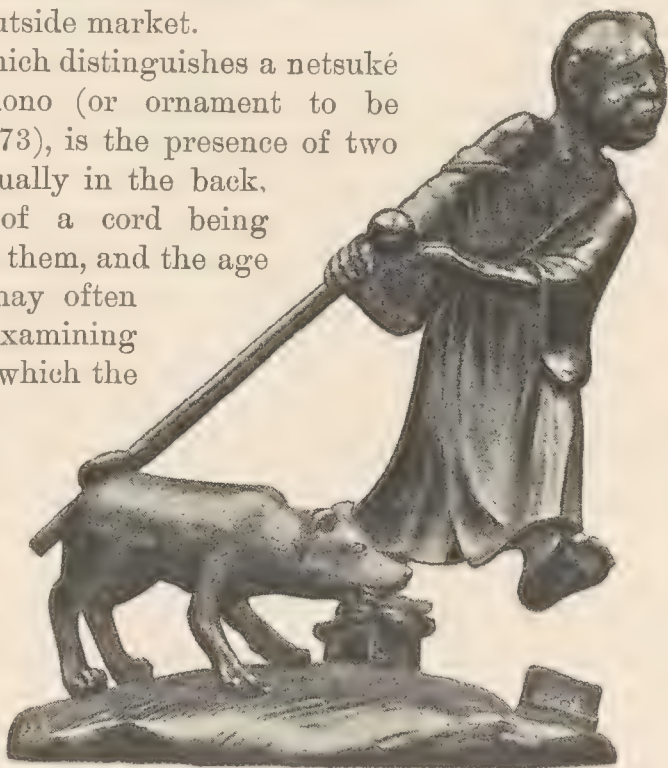
hands; but the ornamentation would in this case have probably taken the form of a flat pattern, either of a conventional or a floral character. Now, as it happened, the human figure was first taken hold of and adopted, although it could not by any means have been considered the best, as most assuredly it was not the most suitable for the purpose. This suggestion, namely, that it is to the image-maker's lack of employment that we owe the netsuké in its most frequent form, does not appear to have occurred to any of the other writers on the subject, but it receives some confirmation from the fact that the first netsuké professional maker, Ri-fu-ho, or Hinaya, of Kyoto, who died in 1670, was thirteen years of age when the Images Edict was put in force, and was in his prime when the demand for them probably failed.

There is no section of Japanese Art which succeeds in attracting the attention of everybody who is brought into contact with it, so much as that which is comprised under the heading of netsuké carvings. Enthusiasts have gone so far as to compare them to the Tanagra figures of Greek origin, and to the finest sculptures of the Gothic age. Mr. Jarves has said that "a first-rate netsuké has positively no rivals." This praise is perhaps not too high if we take care to emphasize the word "first-rate." But there is no branch of Japanese Art in which there are so many failures and so few successes. The main reason for this is, that in the case of figures which have to be viewed all round, any fault in modelling is sure to attract attention, and at once militates against the value of the good work, and as we have seen (p. 88), the weakest point in the whole range of Japanese Art is the draughtsmanship of the figure. Whilst therefore success in this respect, if present, is to be highly valued, a lack of it must drag down the estimation in which the whole class is held.

Until very recently a netsuké was a term which included in the minds of foreigners, every carving below a certain size, and it is only a comparatively small class who now know the contrary. In reality a netsuké is a toggle affixed by a cord to the tobacco pouch, or the pipe, or the inro, to prevent it from slipping through the sash or waistband. In early times it

probably had little, if any, ornamentation, but gradually, as it was one of the few articles upon a Japanese's dress which admitted of it, ornamentation was added. But so long as it was utilised as a toggle it never lost its original idea, or its form; so that whenever we see a netsuké without compactness, or with extraneous excrescences which would catch the folds of the dress, or break off, it may be taken for certain that it is of modern date and has been made for the outside market.

The mark which distinguishes a netsuké from an okimono (or ornament to be placed, see p. 173), is the presence of two small holes, usually in the back, which admit of a cord being strung through them, and the age of a netsuké may often be gauged by examining the amount to which the inside edges of these holes have been worn by the constant rubbing of the cord. The passage for the cord is sometimes cunningly contrived so as not to be



No. 128.—*Okimono: Wood. Blind Shampooer.*
(*Author's Collection.*)

apparent, especially in figures where a leg or arm forms a loop sufficient for the purpose.

Netsukés are made of wood, or lacquered wood, elephant or walrus ivory, boars' tusks or teeth of animals, vegetable ivory, horns of stags, antelopes, and oxen (the latter sometimes compressed), fishbone, walnut or other shells, jade, metal, porcelain, amber, onyx, coral, and crystal. The oldest are those of wood; ivory was only imported in any quantity in

the eighteenth century, and it is singular that whilst those made from this material are almost always inferior to those carved from wood, they hold the pride of place in the estimation of the majority of collectors. The wood used, which is generally the core of the cherry-tree, is softer, more subtle, and less liable to splinter than ivory, and whereas the latter usually fails with age, the wood hardens and acquires a patina of a rich warm hue. Ivories are subjected to soaking in coffee and all sorts of mixtures to make them assume an antique appearance.

Mons. Gonse considers that the occupation of a netsuké-maker was the monopoly of a certain class of artisans who followed the trade from generation to generation. But it is almost certain that many of them were men in a higher station of life, many being dentists who first attained their skill with the chisel whilst carving out artificial teeth.

The ancient city of Nara, probably owing to its being a place replete with temples, was for centuries celebrated for its wood-carvers, and it was here that many of the most notable netsuké-makers lived. Osaka was also the headquarters of a large number, as was Kyōto.

It is impossible to give a list of the most renowned names amongst netsuké-carvers. I have been at the trouble to analyse the lists as given in Gonse, Hart, Murray's Japan, and the catalogue of The Fine Art Society's Exhibition, with the result that of some two hundred and fifty names, not ten per cent. recur in all the lists. That in Murray's Japan (1st edition) is taken from the So-ken Ki-sho (see p. 184).

Those makers whose works are most sought after are, Shiuzan, Miwa, Ikkan, Masanao, Tomotada, Tadatoshi, Demé-Uman, and Demé-Joman,* Minko, Tomochika, Kokei.

Shiuzan lived at Nara towards the close of the seventeenth century. Authentic examples of his work are very rare, and very few if any of those which bear his name are genuine. The So-ken Ki-sho contains a number of drawings after his

* In the Kokkwa the names Demé-Uman and Joman are read Suké-mitsu and Takemitsu. The Soken Kisho, however, gives them in Katakana as above.

netsukés, and the demon attached to the pouch ornament



No. 129.—*Pipe Case and Pouch with Netsuké. By Shiuzan. (Author's Collection.)*

(Illustration No. 129) is similar to one of them, and is stated

by experts to be a Shiuzan, but the work has to my mind too finished an appearance, and is in too good a state of preservation for the date assigned to it, although it is certainly an old one; the signature Shiuzan is affixed to a number of brightly coloured figurines which do not pretend to be of ancient date, and also to others from which time has almost erased the traces of colouring in a style which was affected by the master. Some half a dozen specimens which recently came to Europe had originally been thickly painted in various colours, had been much worn, and represented rude figures, for the most part, of thin, bearded old men. They were unsigned, and were certainly of great age.

The Miwa family came from Yedo. The netsukés of the first maker of this name are held in high esteem and are of great rarity, and it is probably also the case with his netsukés that few of those which pass current as his are actually so. Mons. Gonse can only count with certainty six in Paris. He considers that it is impossible to compress into the space more grandeur of style and knowledge of drawing than is to be found in the works of this master. It is said that Miwa sometimes coloured his netsukés, but of this there is little evidence; his subjects were invariably figures. The spirited okimono of Sho-ki (see page 211) is said to be by Miwa.

There is a class of ivory netsukés about which little is known, even by such experts as Mr. Gilbertson. I refer to the tall, archaic, stiff, oddly dressed figures from three to six inches high, invariably of ivory, much worn both as to the noses and any projecting surfaces. None are signed. They often represent the figure of a Sennin (see p. 46), or else a figure clad in what is meant to be Dutch costume, and they may probably have been made for this latter market. Every collection should contain a representative specimen.

There are certain artists who are identified with the portrayal of animals, and many produced works which leave nothing to be desired. Amongst them Ikkan was noted for his rats, Masanao for fowls and rats, Masatami for his rabbits, Tomotada for his oxen, Tadatoshi for snails, and Tamétaka



No. 130.—*Shō-ki.* *Wooden Okimono, lacquered. Seventeenth Century.*
(*Ernest Hart Collection.*)

for wild boars. Sōkwa Hēi-shiro worked at flowers and grasses in baskets.

Those who excelled in figures were Minkoku, Sensai and Masanao, and in groups Nobuyuki. As Mr. Anderson has well said: "The designs of the netsuké-carvers embrace the whole range of Japanese motives, and the artist tells his story with the utmost lucidity. Nothing is safe from his humour except, perhaps, the official powers that be, of whom the Japanese citizen has a salutary dread. Religion, history, folk-lore, novels, incidents of daily life, all provide material for his tools, and his subjects are mostly treated in a comic or even flippant vein. The pious Dharma or Daruma (see p. 66), aroused from his nine years' motionless contemplation by the attentions of an obtrusive rat who ventures to nibble the saintly ear, is made to assume an expression suggestive of the strongest equivalent for swearing of which we may suppose a good Buddhist to be capable. The Thunder God (p. 16) is seen extracting the storm-cloud from the basket that gives it stowage-room in idle days of sunshine. An inquisitive bird has unwarily inserted his long beak between the valves of a giant clam whose gaping shell had invited the incautious search after the unknown, and now with straining thighs and flapping wings, struggles vainly to regain his liberty. An expectant domestic party surround a fish-kettle, while the head of the family triumphantly extracts a carp of tempting proportions, but the averted heads, disgusted faces, and finger-tweaked noses of the hungry group eloquently proclaim the central idea of Buddhism—the impermanency of all things and the vanity of human wishes. Such examples might be multiplied without end."

It is this variety of subject which gives so great an interest to the collection of these *bibelots*, and which usually leads to their selection more for the incident they illustrate than for their merit as works of art.

There is probably no branch of Japanese Art in which the collector should go less astray, and does go more astray, than that which we are now considering. This is, in a measure, due to his declining to follow his own instincts and omitting

to study the subject carefully. He declines to trust his own judgment because he sees that others, who, he considers, know



No. 131.—*Inro* : Papiermache. Copy of European Design. (From the Collection of Mrs. Dobson.)

more than he does, collect what he would reject; he cannot study the subject because he has no means ready to hand wherewith to do so.

Since the opening up of Japan the attention of the netsuké-workers has been diverted to the manufacture of carvings, which are usually extolled by their possessors rather for the magnitude of the piece of ivory from which they have been cut than for the excellence of their workmanship; this estimate of worth is almost always correct. It is seldom that the subject of these has any attraction save its ugliness, and the illustration that we give of a statuette, belonging to Mr. Z. Merton, of a Japanese lady, is an exception which proves the rule. As we have before pointed out, Japanese Art is almost invariably remarkable in proportion to its diminutiveness.

The netsuké-makers also occupied themselves with the manufacture of toys for the amusement as much of the elder as the younger folk. These consisted of tiny figures (*hina*) carved in wood, dressed in brocade, and with a rounded bottom weighted with lead which necessitated their retaining their equilibrium. Those in the Illustrations No. 133 and 134 are fair samples, and date from the last century. They came in a collection to Europe and are not often to be met with.

They were probably most used at the Girls' Festival on the 3rd of the third month, when they brought out and placed on a doll stand (*hina-dana*) in the best room in the house. Miniature emperors and empresses were put on the top row—(a representation of one will be found on the inro (Illustration No. 82)—then musicians, ladies in court dress, mythical and historical personages with tiny services in porcelain and lacquer, flowers, &c. Mock ceremonies and parties took place and the festival was enjoyed by young and old.

The Illustration No. 131 has been introduced here partly in order to show the use of the netsuké, which here takes the form of a Tengu head, and partly to show how European ornament was occasionally introduced into Japanese work. The design is in this instance taken from a piece of old leather paper of Dutch origin. The *Sō-ken Ki-shō* contains several engravings of Dutch leather papers, and the one from which the pattern on this inro is taken, and which is given there and

called Ningiode, has found much favour with the Japanese, for I have myself acquired some half-dozen specimens in which it is introduced. The artist in almost every instance, not being content with imitating the design, has japanicised it, and also endeavoured to imitate in metal the texture and feel of leather. So too the Demon netsuké (Illustration No. 129) betrays European influence, as does the warrior in No. 123, but the most curious is the ivory netsuké of the Crucifixion (Illustration No. 25A), which is clearly old and has been accurately copied from an old ivory. The writer purposes reading a paper before the Japan Society on the very interesting subject of "Examples of Western influence in Japanese Art."



No. 132.—*Okimono: Ivory.* (From the Collection of Mr. Z. Merton.)

There are few people who have examined even casually any collection of Japanese wares, be it only in a curio-dealer's window, but must have been struck by the frequent introduc-



No. 133.—*Wooden Dressed Figure. Hina. Eighteenth Century. (Author's Collection.)*

tion of masks into Japanese Art. Either it is the original masks themselves, or copies of them, or some representation wherein personages old or young are figured as wearing them.

The usage of the mask in the theatre is another of the many features which connect Japan with Greece. The custom arose from the desire to accentuate either the tragic or the comic expression. In Japan, as M. Gonse shows (*"L'Art Japonais,"* p. 170), they can

be traced back as far as the ninth century, and he illustrates one which dates from the twelfth. They were at first used for performances called Kagura, which were of a semi-religious character, but in later centuries for theatrical and court usages also, the performances or dances taking the names of Bu-gaku and Nō. They have practically fallen into desuetude since the seventeenth century, although representations are still given in certain aristocratic families, who have handed down the art for centuries. The French have a great fondness for Japanese masks, much more so than ourselves, and French artists are wont to adorn their rooms with engravings of them, when they cannot obtain the originals. To us they appear too ghastly and ugly to befit the decoration of the home.



No. 134.—*Urashima : Wooden Dressed Figure. Eighteenth Century. (Author's Collection.)*

It is a matter of wonder who can be the purchasers of the hideous and weak copies which come over in such numbers. I have seen collections of new ivory masks of the feeblest kind, priced at £80! Hokusai in his *Man-gwa* gives two plates of typical masks with names attached.

Netsuké collectors will hardly find their collection complete without one or two masks; those which are most sought after



No. 135.—*Tsuba of Masks. Seventeenth Century. (Gilbertson Collection.)*

are the work of the family of Demé, especially Demé Uman and Demé Joman, who confined themselves to this subject, and attained to such distinction as to receive the title *Wakasa Hogen*.

We must not forget whilst treating of ivory work to mention the name of one who introduced into Japan the art of decorating ivory with incrustations of mother-of-pearl, coloured ivory, metal-work, coral, etc. Shibayama or Dōshō (the

former being his family name) lived at the commencement of the present century, and a good example of his work should find a place in all collections. Care must, however, be taken not to select one overcharged with ornament, such as those he produced later in life, and which his successors are now issuing in considerable quantities.

Of the netsukés illustrated here, Hadésu (p. 26) is by Shiunkosai, Juro (p. 49) by Kokura, the Treasure Ship (p. 51) by Shohosai, Kiyohimé (p. 55) by Masa-ichi, Sho-ki (p. 57) by Ichichodzu, The Temple-Bell (p. 61) by Choki, The Badger Teakettle (p. 76) by Senroku, The Tanuki (p. 132) by Toyoichi, and the Boy with Mask (p. 202) by Minko.

CHAPTER XIV.

POTTERY AND PORCELAIN.

THE following chapter has been written expressly for this volume by Mr. Charles Holme, who has devoted much time to a study of the subject both in England and in Japan, and from the producers' as well as the artistic point of view.

It treats, however, almost entirely of the products of the past.

The characteristics of the potter's art of old Japan, although especially remarkable and interesting, are probably less generally understood than those of any other of its arts. This arises, it may be, from two causes, one of which is that comparatively few good specimens of old ware are exported, and the other that its particular excellences being, in a measure, different from those which distinguish the ceramic art of the West, are not readily appreciated by Western peoples. Even amongst professing connoisseurs the greatest praise is sometimes accorded to objects that least exhibit the characteristics which make the art a worthy one for careful study.

In Europe, at the present day, the highest admiration is commonly reserved to such examples of the ceramic art as display the richest and most elaborate decoration. The potter, it is to be feared in too many instances, receives less honour than the painter of pottery. All the art associated with the choice of material, the method of manipulation and the mysteries of vitrification, is made but of secondary in-

terest to the ornamentation of the surface by the painter after the object had left the potter's hands. The potter has, as it were, lost his individuality, from want of encouragement to display it in the methods of his art. He is a mere machine, constrained to fashion his work from one year's end to another in subservience to the requirements of the painter-decorator. The exigencies of modern manufacture induce a division of labour often destructive to art in the craft, and in none more so than the potter's.

In viewing the subject of the pottery of Japan we have, perhaps, too frequently done so from our own especial stand-



No. 136.—*Raku Tea-bowl (Cha-wan).* (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)

point. We have admired those objects on which a wealth of decoration or painter's work has been displayed, and have considered of far less moment the evidences of individuality in the choice of material and the fashioning of the pot itself. The Japanese have not been slow to understand the nature of the objects that have met with our greatest approval, and the immense quantities of ware which they have made for our especial gratification during the last thirty years testify, not only to their power of adaptation, but also to their unrivalled qualities as pottery painters.

Admirable as many of these latter-day productions are from

certain points of view, they must not in any way be confounded with those of former times; indeed, they are entirely opposed to the traditions and ethics which governed the work of the old potters.

The potter of old Japan lived, as we have seen earlier in this work, under very different conditions to the European, or even the Japanese potter of to-day. He laboured, not to secure large orders from the community, but to give pleasure



No. 137.—Unglazed Tea-jar (*Cha-ire*). (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)

to his patron, and to advance his own reputation as an artist. He tried to infuse originality into his work, and every process of his manufacture received some measure of careful thought.

That his models were taken in the first instance from China and Corea is abundantly evident from native history, but that he was not content to reproduce them in slavish imitation is equally apparent. He was, at all times, ready to learn all that could be learnt from those countries in the methods of

his art—in the character and composition of clays and enamels; but all his productions had a *cachet* of their own, and were not to be confounded with their prototypes.

As a potter; the first matter which called for his attention was the nature of the clay to be employed by him, then came the method of its manipulation, and finally, the character of glaze and the question of decoration. Throughout all the various processes he had ever to be governed by the practical consideration of how the object might be best adapted to the use for which it was intended. How successfully these requirements were met, and how much originality and interest he was able to infuse into each of his operations, is apparent to every careful student of his works. Truly was he, in his palmiest days, an artist-potter, and not a mere machine working for the glorification of a brother of the brush. In this fact lies the especial charm of his productions.

It has been said that the *cha-no-yu*, or tea ceremony, had an immense influence on the potter's art in Japan, and it has been thought by some that this influence was of a nature that rather retarded than helped the progress of the art. The *cha-jin*, or leaders of the ceremony, were eminently conservative in their principles. They delighted in old things and old ways, sometimes, it may be, solely on account of their antiquity. That they should value the objects made for their cult by the early fathers of the pottery industry, even though they might be of the rudest description, can well be imagined. In what country is such a spirit altogether absent? But although history shows this to have been the case, it also shows that the influence of the *cha-jin* was continuously exercised in the advancement of the art. Men of original talent were patronised by them, and new developments of the art were encouraged. If the impulse of genius may have sometimes been restrained by them, the restraint was rather of a guiding nature than of a preventive one. If they did not encourage the production of such wares as pass current for artistic ones in Western countries, it must be remembered that their requirements were of a limited order. The very simple utensils employed in their function did not admit of

an exuberance of artistic fancy. It may be, as some assert, that the potters became so imbued with the ethics of the *cha-no-yu*, that they allowed themselves to be governed in all their productions, whether for ceremonial or other purposes, by the advice of the *cha-jin*. But it is more natural to suppose that the refinements of the tea ceremony, and the precepts of its leaders, were not so much the origin as the outcome of the spirit which animated native art from its beginning.

As a people, the Japanese are singularly free from ostentation, and their homes exhibit a simplicity and refinement in all their surroundings which render them unique. They are devoted admirers of nature's art. As in woodwork, the ornamental value of the natural grain, or the rugosities of the bark, are considered of such high interest that remarkable specimens are accorded the most honourable place in the house; as in metal-work, the natural patina is looked upon as its chief beauty; so in earthenware, the earthiness of earth has to them a charm which should not be hidden, but developed by the work of the artist. The peculiarities, therefore, of the potter's art in Japan must not be considered to have been governed by an artificial ceremony, any more than that of the workers in wood and metal, but rather to have been the expression of the fundamental characteristics of the people—characteristics which, it is more than probable, had their inception in the practices of Shintoism.

Yet, it was immediately affected by the tea ceremony in respect to the forms of the objects required in it. The most important of these were tea-jars (*cha-ire*), in which powdered tea was kept and tea-bowls (*cha-wan*), in which it was mixed with hot water, and from which it was drunk. It is in these objects, more especially the latter, in which a greater measure of freedom of thought was expended, that some of the



No. 138.—*Itoguiré*.

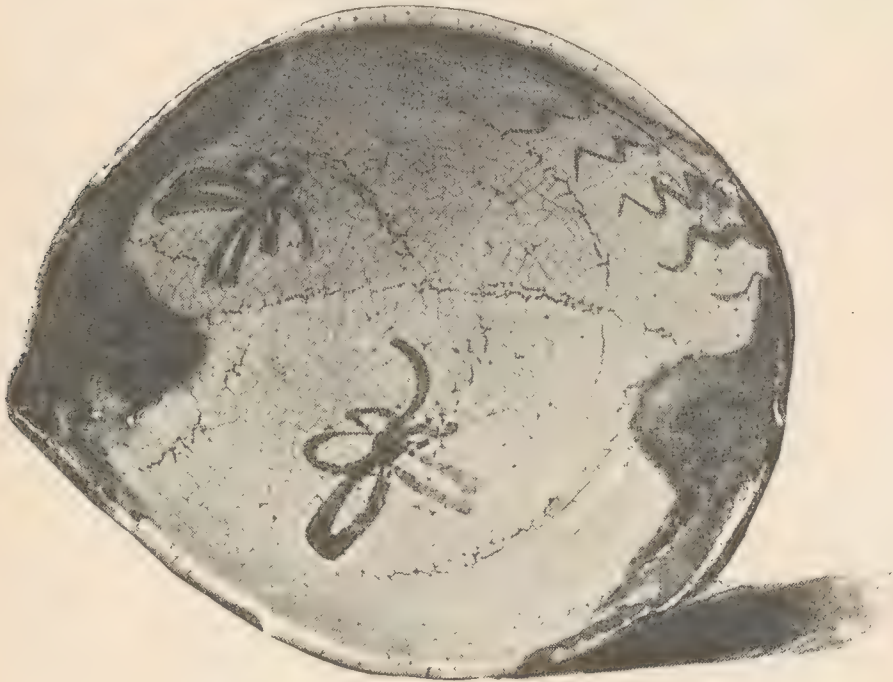
most interesting work of the artist-potters of Japan appears. Tea-jars and tea-bowls were the gift of princes to especially favoured friends. They were highly treasured and carefully preserved by their owners in brocade bags and small boxes, and were only brought out upon special occasions, to be handled with the greatest care.

The burning of incense, whether in connection with the tea ceremony, the incense game—a popular amusement in polite circles—or for other purposes, also brought into use certain utensils often fashioned in pottery by the best makers. Scent boxes (*kogo*), in which little tablets of incense were kept, braziers (*koro*), in which they were burned, and clove boilers (*choji-buro*), vessels in which cloves were boiled to give an aromatic odour to a room, are the forms usually met with; and these often present such ingenuity of idea in their construction and decoration as to render them scarcely, if at all, inferior in interest to the tea-jars and tea-bowls.

Among the other forms made by the artist-potters of Japan may be cited vases for the arrangement of flowers (*hana-ike*). These were made to stand in the recessed portion of the living-room known as the *tokonoma*, to hang against a post, or to be suspended by cords from the ceiling. As they were actually used to hold flowers, and were not merely flower vases in name, they were so made as to help by contrast of effect the beauty of the flowers contained in them; and in attempting a criticism of their artistic merits this fact must ever be borne in mind. Teapots and cups for ordinary tea drinking, saké kettles, bottles and cups, water-bottles and other domestic articles, were also made by famous ceramic artists; but, as a rule, such objects as these, being for general use, were produced in the way of trade by lesser renowned potters. The great majority of domestic utensils for table use were, and still are, made of lacquered wood.

Although the Japanese have been eminently successful in their production of porcelain, some critics claiming for certain makes a degree of superiority even to Chinese porcelain, it does not appear to have taken so entire a hold on the art instincts of the people as it did in China. Porcelain is a

queenly material that demands a most devoted service from him who desires to show its qualities in perfection. The potter cannot do what he likes with it, or get the variety of effects he can from the grosser earths. It may be partly for this reason that so many of the most famous ceramic artists in Japan worked but little in it; and they may also have been determined, to a certain extent, in their choice by the fact that porcelain earth was not obtainable in all parts of Japan, whereas suitable clays for pottery-making might be found in



No. 139.—*Cake-dish (Kioto ware). (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)*

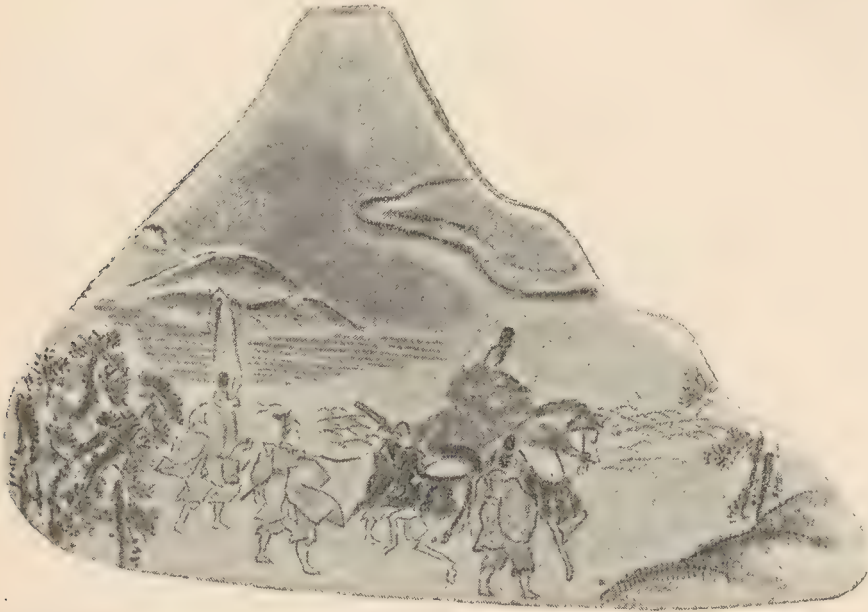
varying qualities in almost every province. Be the reason what it may, it is certain that the Japanese take much interest in the qualities of the earth of which their utensils are made. These are very varied. Some wares, such as the ancient ones of Shigaraki and Iga, are fashioned in an earth almost as coarse as fine gravel; others, such as those of Satsuma and Isé, are of great fineness, and the porcelain of Hirado is justly celebrated for the extreme delicacy of its paste. The Raku ware of Kyōto is somewhat soft and tender,

while the products of the Bizen province have an almost metallic hardness. Each of these qualities is appreciated by the Japanese, and, in many cases, they are singularly well adapted to the uses to which the objects made of them were put. Thus, the soft paste of the Raku bowls, destined to contain hot tea, and by the custom of the *cha-no-yu* to be clasped in both hands in the act of drinking, is especially suitable, being a feeble conductor of heat, to the purpose required. A bowl made of it could not fail to be much more agreeable in use than one of porcelain; and, moreover, it would retain the heat in the liquid for a much longer period. The remarkable hardness of Bizen stoneware adapts it to use as incense-burners or pots to contain fire, and it is therefore often employed for that purpose. The great toughness and fineness of the paste also render it a very good medium for modelling, and work of this nature of the greatest excellence was sometimes made of it.

It is a noteworthy fact that on most examples of old Japan ware, however they might be otherwise enamelled or decorated, certain portions were left uncovered, so as to expose the earth of which they were composed. This is especially the case with the bowls and jars used in the tea ceremony. The glaze upon these was usually so applied as to leave bare the lower exterior part of the vessel. This method had two advantages: the bottom of the object was kept clear of the irregularities that would be caused by the uneven running of the glaze upon it, and it permitted the earth to be inspected and criticised by the guests—an important detail of the ceremony.

In fashioning objects into shape the Japanese potter adopted many methods. Although the throwing wheel was in early use—having been introduced in Japan in the seventh century, as some assert by a priest named Giyogi—it was never permitted to entirely monopolise the potter's manner of work. Throughout the entire history of Japanese ceramics, tea and other vessels have been fashioned entirely by hand or by the aid of the modelling tool. Many are the examples, especially in the wares of Iga, Kyōto, Seto, and Soma, dex-

terously manipulated into quaint forms that charm the eye with evidences of artistic feeling. Of such a nature are the Raku tea-bowls before referred to. Introduced in the sixteenth century by Ameya, a Corean, Raku ware was perfected by his son Chojiro, aided, it is said, by the advice of a *cha-jin*. An interesting series of bowls of this ware is exhibited in the South Kensington Museum, which includes pieces made by each generation of makers excepting the first. The shape of these bowls varies slightly in almost every piece that is made;



No. 140.—Incense-box (*Kogo*). By *Ninsei*. (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)

but the one shown in Fig. 136, which is one of the plainest, may be accepted as a typical one. We may note in this example some irregularities of shape on the sides of the bowl, a curious turning in and rounding of the rim, and an entire freedom from sharp edges and angularities. All these features are the result of much consideration on the part of the potter. The irregularities of shape on the sides enable the tea-drinker to obtain a better grasp of the bowl; the turned-in rim lessens the danger of the liquor being spilled when passed from one guest to another, and the softened curves and

rounded edges minimise the risk of breakage, which otherwise would be somewhat great, owing to the fragile nature of the ware. The art of it lies in the eloquence it displays of its earthy nature, just as the art of old Venetian glass lies in the witness it bears of its vitreous one.

The small unglazed teapots bearing the mark of "Banko," made in recent years by various potters of Yokkaichi and Kuwana, in the province of Isé, delicately fashioned as they are between finger and thumb in ever-changing variety of manner, are familiar and popular instances of the charm and possibilities of work modelled by the hand alone. It is to be regretted, however, that so many examples of this interesting modern ware are spoiled by hastiness in finish and weakness in decoration.

The Japanese artist is not ashamed of his hands or his tools, and just as he delights to show the marks of the brush in a rapid sketch or in an example of bold calligraphy, so does he prefer to see the natural marks, be they made by hand or by tool, caused in the fashioning of his pottery. It is in such peculiarities that the work of the artist-potter may generally be recognised. The figures of Ki-Seto or Yellow Seto, of Takatori or of Tokio, crisply modelled with the bamboo spatula, owe not a little of the vigorous charm to the frank evidences they bear of the method of their production. The unglazed tea-jar shown in Fig. 137 is an example of ware in which the marks of the spatula, used in roughly shaping and decorating it, are retained.

In the case of vessels formed on the throwing wheel, we often find much independence of thought displayed in their finish. Instead of obliterating the ridges made by the fingers in throwing an object into shape, they are sometimes retained, and even accentuated, with a resulting freedom from the machine-like perfection to which ordinary turned ware is brought. The object may also be otherwise modelled in a pleasant quaintness of form. Abundant examples showing these characteristics will be found in almost any collection of old Japanese pottery.

The regard which the Japanese show for every natural

feature of an object may again be illustrated in their retention of the *itoguiré*, or mark on the base of a vessel, caused by the thread or wire used to detach it from the wheel (Fig. 138). The appearance of the mark is that of a series of rings, one within the other, converging sometimes to the



No. 141.—*Mizoro Water-bottle (Tsubo).* (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)

right and sometimes to the left, and is especially to be observed in early tea-jars. The make of a vessel, otherwise, perhaps, a little doubtful, may frequently be decided by the particular form or direction of these thread marks. In their absence, as in the case of bowls or other vessels having a projecting rim around the base, other characteristic marks

appear. These may consist of the name of the maker or the pottery, sometimes incised with the spatula, sometimes stamped with a die, and sometimes painted. In the absence of a signature, a peculiar spiral or other mark may attest the maker. In the illustrations to the work on Japanese Pottery by Ninagawa Noritané, the bases of most of the objects figured are also shown—a fact that lends to it much additional value.

Toshiro, a Japanese potter of the early thirteenth century, made a special visit to China to perfect himself in his art, and on his return to his native town of Seto, in Owari, he introduced great improvements in the character of the wares made there. Although the glazing of pottery may have been practised in Japan at a much earlier date than the time of Toshiro, there is no doubt that it was owing to his exertions that a great impetus was given to the art. He not only improved the quality of vitreous enamels, but he introduced new and more artistic methods of their application. From his time forward, great attention was paid to this branch of the potter's art, of which it soon became one of the most important and interesting features. To know something of Japanese glazes is to be familiar with the soft greenish greys of the Sanda Seiji ware, the dull leaden blue or the metallic sheen of the brown glaze of Bizen, the iridescent blacks, reds, browns, and bottle-greens of the Raku wares, the lustrous yellow-brown of Ohi, the splashed Oribé wares, the thick opaque overglazes of Shigaraki, the delicate greys and salmon shades of Hagi, the heavy brown and yellow glazes of Tamba, or the speckled greys and browns of Soma. These and many others of like interest and beauty, as they are better known, and their characteristics better understood, have an ever-increasing charm to the earnest and sympathetic student, who soon cease to wonder, as perchance he may at first have done, at the artistic value in which they are held by the Japanese connoisseur.

Crackled effects in the glaze are sometimes highly interesting. They are caused by a rapid cooling of the enamel, and become a serious defect unless managed with especial skill.

If the fissures are too open, the vessel is rendered porous and unfit to hold a liquid, and little flakes of glaze sometimes become detached and fall away. In the choicest examples of Japanese crackled wares, the fissures, although at first sight apparently broad, are, actually, extremely fine, and can only be detected on the face of the enamel by the aid of a powerful magnifying glass. Their apparent breadth is caused



No. 142.—*Raku Tea-bowl (Cha-wan). By Kenzan. (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)*

by the black or reddish stain which fills them, and penetrates the enamel on either side. Sometimes the crackle does not appear at all on the surface of the enamel, the fissures being apparently closed by a process of refiring; and, in certain examples, a thin overglaze effectually covers them. In an ordinary faulty craze, such as may frequently be seen in European glazed pottery, the fissures are very irregularly

disposed, occurring in patches or in long unbroken lines. In a perfect crackle, the lines should be well broken up, and be of uniform size all over the enamel. In some cases, especially in those where a heavy opaque white enamel is used, the crackle is sparsely displayed, and it is in such examples that the fissures are usually filled in with colouring matter. The fine cream-coloured Satsuma and Awata wares are noted for the minute character of their crackle, and, in choice specimens, the crazed lines are so fine and so close together as scarcely to be perceptible to the naked eye. Some writers declare this extreme fineness of crackle to be a distinguishing characteristic of genuine Satsuma wares; but the Awata potters frequently produced examples vying in this respect with the finest Satsuma. There is no doubt but that the production of the most perfect crackles was a matter of special manipulation, and their exact reproduction has been found to be by European potters a difficulty not readily surmountable.

It was probably from Corea that the Japanese obtained their first ideas in reference to the decoration of pottery. Ninagawa Noritané says that the early pottery vessels of Japan—and he is speaking of a period as far back as the third century A.D.—“made after the system of this country (Corea) presented in their interior a wave pattern, such as is still in use to-day, and on their exterior were parallel lines arranged in the form of squares. These patterns were moulded in relief and not painted, and may sometimes be seen in examples of modern Satsuma and Kyōto wares.

A later class of decoration introduced in Japan by potters from Corea is the Mishima style, which consists of simple patterns, sometimes incised, sometimes stamped in the body of the object, and filled in, before being glazed, with a white or black “slip,” or paste. This ware has been produced in several districts of Japan, and, among other, in the province of Satsuma, where potters were brought from Corea after the invasion of that country by Hideyoshi in the sixteenth century. The simple lines, stars, and dots of Satsuma Mishima exhibit but little fertility of imagination, and, on this account,

it is much less interesting than the same class of ware produced at Yatsushiro, in the province of Higo, which in potting, in glaze, and in decoration, is far superior.

The influence of China in the matter of decoration has been most directly displayed in the porcelain of Japan. The use of cobalt blue in underglazed painting was introduced early in the sixteenth century by Gorodayu Shonsui, a Japanese, the father of the porcelain industry in Japan. After



No. 143.—Bowl (*Hachi*). By *Kenzan*. (*From the South Kensington Museum Collection.*)

studying the art in China, he brought home with him all the materials necessary for the manufacture of porcelain, including the earth, the colour and the glazes. He settled in the Hizen province, and this soon became the great centre for this branch of the ceramic art, suitable materials of every description for its manufacture being found native there. About the middle of the seventeenth century a pottery was started by the Prince of Hirado at Mikawaji. The blue and

white porcelain produced there was of the finest description both as to quality and decoration, and was made solely for the use of the Prince, or for gifts to notable personages or friends.

Also, about the same time, overglaze enamel painting was commenced by Tokuzayemon, a native of Imari, who learnt the process from a Chinaman. The art rapidly spread, and many potteries were established in the Hizen province, especially at Arita, for the production of the new ware. A large trade in it was soon entered into with the Dutch, whose commercial transactions at Deshima were, at that time, important. Their exportations found their way to all parts of Europe, and are now familiarly known in sale-rooms as "old Japan."

As might naturally be expected, in copying the Chinese methods of porcelain manufacture, the Japanese also copied Chinese forms and the characteristics of Chinese decoration, more especially as these forms and this class of decoration were precisely what their patrons, the Dutch, most preferred. In China, as in Europe, porcelain vases and other objects are frequently used solely for their decorative value, or in other words, as ornaments about a house. For this purpose large pieces with effectively coloured designs are especially valuable, and hence were made to supply the Dutch demands; just as similar pieces are made to-day in obedience to general Western requirements.

The Japanese had no use themselves for objects of this character, and at all times preferred simple and unpretentious methods of decoration. Of the Hizen productions in porcelain, the Sometsuki, or blue and white, seemed to appeal more directly to their art instincts; and it is, therefore, particularly in this class of ware, and especially in the Hirado porcelain, which was not produced as an article of commerce, that the true native characteristics displayed themselves. The perfect quality of the porcelain of this ware, prepared as it was with the greatest labour and skill, the soft milk-white character of its glaze, the translucent colour and careful finish of the underglaze decoration, seem so to be in harmony

with each other as to make a perfect whole. The true quality of porcelain seems to have been entirely realised, and every operation brought up to an equal standard of delicacy of finish. It may be that the colour of the blue of the best Japanese ware is more retiring or quiet in effect than that of the best Chinese, and the decoration less assertive or "effective," but in this effect it illustrates the native characteristics. Nankin "blue" will appeal to those who value it for the part it plays so well in a scheme of room decoration. Hirado blue will be best appreciated when viewed as a perfect work of Art in itself. Each ware possesses certain qualities of beauty the other has not.

Overglaze decoration was called by the Japanese *Gosai*, or five colours, in allusion to the number of colours which were at first actually employed. It is now termed *Nishikidé*, or brocade painting. The painting of Kakiyemon, who worked in conjunction with Tokuzayemon in this style, is generally considered to be more characteristically Japanese than that of other Hizen painters; and such examples of his works that are still preserved show a simplicity and purity of colour and line, combined with a delicacy of workmanship, that proclaim him to have been an undoubted artist. But it was reserved to Ninsei, a Kyōto potter of the seventeenth century, to be the first to give an entire Japanese expression to this class of decoration.

In the work of Ninsei there was no *bouleversement* of the methods of the old potter's art. Such innovations as he introduced were so incorporated with the old as to appear only as a legitimate development. Earth, manipulation, glaze, crackle—all manifested a power of selection, workmanship and invention, that probably has never been surpassed. Captain Brinkley, speaking of him, says:—"Not only was the pâte of his pieces close and hard, but the crackle of the buff or cream-coloured glaze was almost as regular as the meshes of a spider's web. Only the most painstaking manipulation of materials and management of temperature in stoving could have accomplished such results." And again:—"His monochrome glazes are scarcely less remarkable than his

crackle; first among them must be placed a metallic black run over a grass-green in such a way that the latter shows sufficiently to correct any sombreness of effect. On the surface of this glaze, or else in reserved medallions of cream-like crackle, are painted diaper and floral designs in gold, silver, red, and other coloured enamels. Another glaze invented by him, and imitated by the chief experts amongst his successors, is a pearl-white, through which a pink blush seems to spread."

Ninagawa Noritané says that his earlier works were decorated with designs of the Kano school, and his later ones with those of the Tosa school. The free sketchy character of his earlier method appealed strongly to Japanese taste, and found many imitators, who, unfortunately, were not always content simply to copy his style, but stamped their productions with a seal bearing his name. The scent-box (*kogo*) shown in Fig. 140 is an interesting example of his later style—a style which will be recognised as the parent of much of the ware made in later days at the Awata (Kyōto) potteries. The study of many examples of his ware would be necessary to give anything like a fair idea of the versatility of his genius. M. Gonse has well said, "It would appear that each piece which left his hands was the fruit of an effort of special invention, of an attentive study of manufacture." It is related that Ninsei erected kilns in various districts of Kyōto, and work in these was carried on by his pupils and followers, who usually stamped their wares with the name of the district in which they were produced. Fig. 141 represents an example from the Mizoro kiln, and is an excellent imitation of the style most generally associated with the name of the master. This *tsubo*, or water-bottle, is made of brown earthenware, and is thrown upon the wheel. The slight scorings left by the hand or tools in turning it are retained, and help to afford by their irregularity a pleasant play of light upon the vessel when glazed, and also enable a firm hold to be obtained upon it. The glaze, which is not carried quite to the bottom, is of an agreeable buff colour, and its crackle is accentuated with a brown stain—no trace of crack

or fissure appearing on the surface. The mouth is covered with a dark red overglaze, which is allowed to express its meltable nature by irregular gutterings. The pattern upon it is the favourite *sho-chiku-bai*, the pine, the bamboo, and the plum blossom—emblems of longevity, uprightness, and sweetness—the best gifts of fortune. It is painted in translucent enamels, of a deep and quiet blue and a bright but harmonious green, through which the crackle of the underglaze may be distinctly seen, and the effect is heightened with touches of gold. This example may be accepted as a fair general type of the true Japanese spirit which Ninsei infused into his own work and into that of his worthy contemporaries and followers, and which still obtains even to-day among the more conservative spirits of the potting brotherhood, among those who have not been altogether led away by the gold of the foreigner.

Kenzan, who lived in Kyōto during the early period of his long life (A.D. 1663—1743), was probably the most original of the Kyōto potters after Ninsei. Brother of Korin, the artist and lacquer worker, he displayed not a few of the remarkable characteristics which rendered Korin famous. He was, in fact, the exponent in pottery decoration of the Korin school—a school which, as Mr. Anderson says, had an influence upon industrial design more strongly marked than that of any other before the time of Hokusai. The majority of his Kyōto works were produced in the fine Awata paste, but he also employed the coarse clay of Shigaraki and other varieties. Sometimes his vessels were fashioned upon the wheel, and sometimes entirely by hand. The nature of his glazes, and the method of their application, varied also very greatly, as well as did the character of the decoration. In his early days he was very successful in his imitation of the Raku wares of the Chojiros. The teabowl shown in Fig. 142 is by his hand. It is glazed with a beautiful iridescent red glaze, and is figured in white slip with an inscription which may be translated as follows: “One sip of the tea, one touch of the hand, will bring new life. Kenzan copies this.”

The broad treatment and bright colours sometimes affected

by Kenzan in his decorated wares may cause such works to appear to the eye, at first sight, somewhat crude; but a more intimate acquaintance convinces the student that their every detail is by a master hand. Like his brother, he was a true impressionist, who sought in decoration for effects beyond mere mechanical detail of form—effects resulting from contrast or from harmony of colour or material, from balance of composition and distribution of parts, or which exhibited power and freedom of the hand; and, above all, in which there was ever present the exalted poetic feeling characteristic of the master Art-work of Japan. His works were not such as would be likely to appeal to the masses. They were the very antithesis of pretty. One may imagine them to be that of a man who did not care whether he pleased any one but himself or not; who had remarkable boldness of ideas, and the courage to carry them out. They are eminently suggestive, and each example appears to show some fresh idea. Their rarity alone is to be regretted.

In any history of the Kyōto potters, such names as Kin-kozan, Rokubei, Taizan, Tanzan, Yeiraku, Dohatchi, must stand prominently forth as worthy exponents of the Art of Japan. The two latter worked occasionally in porcelain, in the production of which they were highly successful. The *kin-randé*, or gold brocade decoration of Yeiraku Riozen, brought to him some especial repute. This class of decoration consists of designs of mythological animals, flowers, &c., elaborately painted in gold upon a red ground. The careful finish of the work showed great technical skill; but, as its name implies, it was little more than an adaptation of the patterns and colours of the brocade weaver, and would be equally beautiful and appropriate if it were painted on a piece of paper or a modern sheet-iron coal-box. Fortunately for his reputation this was not the only class of ware made by Yeiraku, whose quaintly fashioned and decorated earthenware prove him to have been a potter worthy to take rank with the others we have named.

Soon after the establishment of porcelain manufacture in the Hizen province, Prince Mayeda, of Kaga, sent over a

potter to Arita to study the methods of the new art. This potter, upon his return, commenced to make at Kutani the wares for which that village afterwards became so famous. It was not, however, until the end of the seventeenth century, when Morikagé commenced his labours, that any notable examples were produced. It is related that Morikagé received instruction in painting from the great artist Kano Tanyu. The boldness and effectiveness of the sure and rapid touch of the Kano school is well shown in the specimens attributed to Morikagé. The translucent brilliancy of his enamel colours—purple, green, and yellow—add not a little to the decorative value of his work.

The gold and red, or *kinrandé* decoration, applied in more recent years by the Kutani artists upon pairs of vases, large plates, etc., is distinctively Chinese in character, and exhibits, with some exceptions, but little of the true spirit of Japanese ceramic art.

Towards the end of the last century, or early in the present one, the Satsuma potters, who had hitherto been content to leave undecorated the beautiful cream-coloured faïence made by them, or to copy the primitive ornament of their Korean ancestors, became alive to the beauties of over-glaze painting as practised by the Kyōto potters, and of its suitability to be applied to their own wares. Some of their fraternity were, therefore, sent to Kyōto to study the art as practised there. Such good use did they make of their time, and so well were they able to apply the lessons they had learnt, that upon their return they commenced the production of that which has brought the name of Satsuma into repute throughout the civilised world. *Nishikidé*, or brocade-painted Satsuma, as the ware decorated with gold and over-glaze colours is called, was never made in large quantities. The expense of its production was too great to permit of its general use. It was from the first an *article de luxe*, for the use only of the Daimyo or for presents to his friends, and to those whom he wished to honour. No wonder, therefore, that genuine examples of the ware are scarce and rarely to be seen. But the demand which arose for it in later years for export to Europe and America, caused

imitations to be made in various parts of Japan, some of which so closely copy the characteristics of the original ware as to deceive any but the most practised connoisseurs. Especially is it difficult to detect those pieces which are genuine Satsuma in so far as the ware itself is concerned, and false only in the origin of the decoration.

Professor Morse, in his admirable article on "Old Satsuma," in *Harper's Monthly* for September, 1888, says: "By constant use it became richly though lightly coloured, and one at all familiar with the first colouring of a meerschaum, may form some idea of a bit of old Satsuma; and having used this comparison, it may be carried still farther by adding that artificially coloured or stained Satsuma recalls the appearance of a spurious or cheap meerschaum; indeed, the simile may be completed by stating that a good deal of pride is taken in the gradual colouring of a bit of Satsuma by constant use, and a peculiar yellow cloth is kept at hand to polish the glaze from time to time, very much as a smoker polishes his pipe." Modern Satsuma is much whiter than the similar class of ware made in Kyōto and Awaji, and in consequence it is not appreciated by the Western buyer, who finds it too "cold" in effect. Hence, in order to please him, it is stained by the Japanese to the required shade. Many a foreigner will purchase a stained piece in preference to an unstained one, although he knows it to be stained and quite a modern example. The Japanese should not, therefore, be burdened with all the blame sometimes attached to them for the production of modern "old" Satsuma.

Satsuma faïence is usually much more thickly made, and therefore heavier than its imitations. Its glaze is also not so glassy in appearance. Its decoration generally consists of floral subjects and diapers, figures of saints, so commonly to be seen on its so-called imitations, never being found on genuine Satsuma decorated wares. The decoration is somewhat sparsely distributed, and does not entirely cover up the object, as upon the Tōkyō and Osaka painted imitations (?) especially favoured by the European buyer. It is always well potted, and has a solidity of appearance that does not

suggest ready breakage. The forms in which it was made were small in size, and consisted of the usual shapes in native use, such as bowls, incense burners, scent boxes, etc. Well-modelled figures (*okinono*) have also been made by the Satsuma potters, who, indeed, enjoy some repute in Japan at the present day for the excellence of their work of that nature.

The history of European influence on Japanese ceramics has still to be written, and it is to be feared it will not form a very pleasant subject, at least in its early chapters. There will probably be found some danger of confounding it in these with Chinese influence, inasmuch as the latter has, to a considerable extent, worked hand in hand with the former. So long as the Japanese potter laboured only for Japanese requirements, he only adopted such new ideas or methods from China as were acceptable to the tastes of his patrons; but the wealthy "red hairs" who came to him from the West could see no beauties in the objects that had given the greatest pleasure to the princes and men of refinement of his own country; and in order that the potter might participate in the overflow of silver dollars with which the foreigner was blessed, he was obliged to put aside those principles which he and his father before him had looked upon as the very fundamental ones of their craft, and produce wares totally at variance with his preconceived ideas of the right.

CHAPTER XV.

XYLOGRAPHY.—ENGRAVED PRINTS AND BOOKS.

THE branch of Art which is known under the above name is so important a one in connection with Japanese Art that it can hardly be treated of at all in a small compass. But illustrations, good, bad, and indifferent, coloured and otherwise, come over here in such profusion, are obtainable at such small cost, and consequently are so widely distributed, that a rapid glance at the history of the Art which has produced them comes of necessity within the scope of this work.

It is to Mr. Anderson that Englishmen must turn if they wish for accurate information on the subject. His "Pictorial Arts of Japan" and his catalogue of Japanese paintings in the British Museum, will be found to be the completest guides extant. From these I have, with his permission, culled much of my information. Mr. Anderson, Mons. Gonse, Mons. Duret, and Mons. Bing are the largest collectors of engravings. The last-named has done much to spread a knowledge of them through his magazine, *Artistic Japan*.

Japan has learnt from China almost all she knows of the art of graving on wood, not only as regards style, but the actual method of workmanship.

The place of honour amongst Japanese amateurs and collectors is always held by Chinese wares, and whether it be paintings, books, porcelain or bronzes, the preference is given to these over the products of their own country. Chinese books

have always had free course in Japan, and every workman can obtain them. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that



No. 144.—*Kanaoka at Work.* (From "*L'Art Japonais.*")

Japanese Art is redolent of Chinese types, heroes, animals, history, and legend, thinly veiled in Japanese clothing. Up

to the close of the seventeenth century there was little, if any, Art of an independent character.

The ancient methods of painting are now rapidly giving way to European. A portrait of the Chief of the Police, painted in oil by Mr. (*sic*) Tokotsugi, a well-known painter of Tōkyō, has been hung in the assembly hall of the Metropolitan Police office, but, except in such cases as this, the Japanese painter still holds his brush exactly as did his Chinese prototype two thousand years ago. He works with a soft brush held as far as possible from the point and with the hand raised from the paper.

The processes which characterised the works a thousand years ago have descended unaltered (with an exception hereafter to be noted) to the present day—the rapid sweep of the brush full of colour by which the stem and foliage of the bamboo is to European eyes so wonderfully translated; the system of outlining the folds of a dress in a variety of eccentric ways (see Illustration No. 147); the method of perspective which makes all landscapes look as if they had been painted from an elevation, the mountains towering up behind one another; the avoidance of difficulties by the introduction of clouds in all sorts of incongruous places—all these are of Chinese origin.

The Chinese, as most people know, exercised the art of printing centuries before it was known in Europe, and this applies also to illustrations by means of block printing. When the Japanese adopted it from them is not certain, but engravings are extant which date from the thirteenth century. It does not come within my province to discuss these, and I shall therefore at once ask my reader to pass over the gap between this period and the seventeenth century, for the good reason that no examples earlier than that date are likely to come into his possession.

It may be well before proceeding to treat of the creators of book illustration, to say something of what was illustrated, and how it was done.

Xylography was first employed in the service of religion for reproducing texts and images. This was followed by the pro-

duction of publications such as romances and novels, in which the illustrations were about on a par with those in our English



No. 145.—*Hiroataka painting Hades.* By Yosäi. (From "*L'Art Japonais.*")

chap books before the commencement of the era which came in with Bewick. These were followed by single sheet prints (*ichi-*

mai-yé) and by that large class of productions which emanated from the theatre as advertisements and portraits of favourite actors, scenes, and plays.

Chromo-xylography originated in Japan at the commencement of the last century with "single sheets" printed from three blocks, black, pale green or blue, and pale pink. The designs of Torii Kiyonobu, Kiyomasu, and Okumura Masanobu were executed in these tints.

Nishimura Shigénaga added a fourth block in 1720, and two others were added about forty years later. Mr. Anderson considers that the art was brought to perfection between 1765 and 1785 in the single sheet pictures of Torii Kiyonaga, Suzuki Harunobu, and Katsugawa Shunsho, and maintained for a further twenty-five years under the Utagawas—Toyohara, Toyohiro and Toyokuni, etc.

Mr. Anderson thus describes the technique:—

"The picture drawn for the engraver upon thin translucent paper of a particular kind, is pasted face downwards upon a block of wood, usually cherry—sawn in the direction of the grain, instead of across it, as in Europe—and the superfluous thickness of paper is removed by a process of scraping until the design is clearly visible; the borders of the outline are then incised—very lightly in the more delicate parts—with a kind of knife, and the interspaces between the lines of the drawing are finally excavated by means of tools of various shapes. The ink is applied with a brush, and the printing is effected by hand pressure (assisted by a kind of pad), to which procedure may be attributed much of the beauty of the result. Certain gradations of tone, and even polychromatic effects, may be produced from a single block by suitable application of ink or colour upon the wood; and on looking at these examples, it is often apparent that a great deal of artistic feeling had been exercised in the execution of the picture after the designer and engraver had finished their portion of the work. Uninked blocks for the purpose of embossing portions of the design, as an aid to the effects of colour-printing, were certainly used about 1730, and perhaps at an earlier date.

“The effect of printing from two or more blocks was in some cases obtained by preparing a single block with ink of different colours, or with different shades of the same colour. This appeared as early as 1740 in some landscapes in the ‘Gwako Senran,’ where the distance is represented by pale ink, against which the dark foreground stands out in bold relief, and in the Sōshiseki gwafu (1769—70) chromatic effects are produced by the same means. Sky and water tones are in like manner graduated in colour prints, the superfluity of colour where the lighter shade is required being removed by the simple process of wiping the inked block with a cloth, according to directions previously given to the engraver.

“In the ordinary colour prints the effects are obtained by the use of a number of additional blocks engraved in series from copies of the outline impression taken from the first or outline block. The correctness of register is secured by preserving two angles of the original block level with the surface of the lines of the engraving, and marking each of these with incisions in a certain direction. The angles are printed off upon the sheet bearing the first outline, and are repeated in fac-simile in the cutting of all the subsequent blocks, the corner marks left upon the paper after contact with block No. 1 thus being made to serve as an exact guide for the accurate apposition of the sheet upon each successive block. The printings are all effected by hand pressure. The process is simple, but the rarity of faults of register in Japanese chromo-xylography proves that it is efficacious.”

Mr. Anderson has divided the era of xylography into six periods, and the following are the artists who were notable during each of them, the names of the most distinguished being printed in capital letters. The styles which each principally exercised are appended to their names. The first and second periods may be passed over, the work produced being archaic in character, and the producer’s names unknown.

3RD PERIOD. 1680—1710. Initiated all the styles of wood engraving.

HISHIGAWA MORONOBU, founder. Fine examples rare. Technically excellent. Master of colours.

Okamura Masanobu } delineators of women.
Miyagawa Chōshun }

Hasegawa Tōin.

Ishikawa Riusen.

TORII KIYONOBU. Founder of Torii family, which first used chromo-xylography and introduced theatrical sheets and books.

4TH PERIOD. 1710—1765.

TACHIBANA MORIKUNI (1670—1746). Designs for artisan artists still in use.

NISHIGAWA SUKÉNOBU (1671—1760). Prolific artist. Excelled in every branch, especially women.

Tsukioka Tangéi (1717—1786). Heroic deeds. Scenery.

Oōka Shunboku (1676—1760). Copies of old masters still used by artisans.

Torii family: Kiyomitsu, Nishimura } single-sheet chromo-xylo-
Shigénaga, and Ishikawa Toyonobu } graphs.

5TH PERIOD. 1765—1820. Palmy age of chromo-xylography. Printings increased to six, gradations added. New features; topographical handbooks, albums of miscellaneous sketches, *e.g.*, Man-gwa, and many volume novels.

TORII KIYONAGA (—1765). Women and novelettes.

Kiyotsuné.

Kiyominé.

KATSUGAWA SHUNSHŌ. Theatrical portraiture; women.

Shunkō, Shunjō, and Shunyei, pupils of Shunshō. Theatrical portraiture.

TORIYAMA SÉKBYEN. Book Illustrator.

Ippitsusai Bunchō

Suzuki Harunobu

Isoda Shōbei or Koriūsai } delineators of women.

Koyékawa Shunchō

Kitawo Kosuisai Shigémasa

Utagawa Toyoharu, and pupils Toyohiro and Toyokuni (1772—1828). Theatrical portraiture, female celebrities and novels.

Hosoda Yeishi.

Kitawo Masanobu.

Kubo Shunman.

Kitawo Keisai Masayoshi. Inventor of sketches of figures in one or two strokes.

Kikugawa Yeisan.

Hosōi Chōbunsai.

KITAGAWA UTAMARO.

HOKKEI.

HOKUSAI.

KUNISADA, Kuniyasu. Pupils of Toyokuni.

TAKÉHARA NOHUSHIGÉ, or Shunchōsai. Topography.

Yanagawa Shigénobu
Giokuransai Sadahidé } novels.
Keisai Teisen

6TH PERIOD. 1825—1860. Decline.

Utagawa Kunisada. Pupil of Toyokuni. Single sheet and
theatricals. Pupils work marked by yellow.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi. Best work single sheet.

ICHIRIUSAI HIROSHIGÉ. Topography (pupil of Toyohiro). (See
page 13.)

HASEGAWA SETTAN. Topography; rival of Hiroshigé.

Haségawa Settei, son of Settan.

Matsukawa Hanzan. Topography.

Hokuchō

Hokuyei

Hokushiu

Sadamasu

Shigéharu

} Pupils of Utagawa school at Osaka.

KIKUCHI YŌSAI. Portraits of ancient worthies.

RECENT PERIOD. Revival.

Bairai. Birds and flowers.

Sensai Yeitoku. Fairy tales and artisan's designs.

Kawanabé Kiōsai. Comic.

Many of the artists named in the foregoing lists would, if space permitted, be worthy of a more extended notice. Concerning this, however, I must again refer those who seek for information to Mr. Anderson's "Pictorial Arts" and "British Museum Catalogue."

The name of Hokusai cannot, however, be passed by. Without the results of his facile brush, how should we have any idea of artisan life in Japan as it existed before the advent of modern ideas? Without his influence in shaking the foundations of tradition, how would that fatal incumbrance to the progress of Japanese Art have been overthrown?

Like all reformers, his admirers, especially those out of his own country, have placed him on a pedestal with, as companions, Rembrandt, Ghirlandajo, and Botticelli! This laudation is not shared in the artist's own country even now, and was not at all the case during the greater part of Hokusai's life. Little was known of him until the beginning of this

century, except that he was the son of a mirror-maker, born in 1760 at Yedo, his master being Katsukawa Shunshō.



No. 146.—*Hokusai as Kojima* (see p. 30). *After Hokusai* (From "*L'Art Japonais*.")

When well on in life he opened a school for industrial work-

men, and for them he published in 1812 the first volume of his celebrated *Man-gwa*. This was sold very cheaply, and the artist rapidly achieved distinction amongst his own class. New volumes were quickly demanded, and from this time until his death in 1849 he worked incessantly for the publishers. As he modestly stated, "he had indeed worked diligently from his sixth to his eighty-eighth year." A list of publications which contain his illustrations will be found at page 357 of the "British Museum Catalogue," where his proper position in the realm of Art is thoroughly discussed and assigned. Some of his works are very rare, especially original drawings; very clever forgeries of these latter by contemporary pupils frequently come to hand, but the majority of the master's work has perished, for it was only drawn on thin paper to be fastened on the block and destroyed in the process of engraving. Our frontispiece shows the master as stated in the preface to the "*Man-gwa*" "handing down to future ages and bringing within the knowledge of our remote fellow-men beyond a thousand leagues, the spirit and form of all the joy and happiness we see filling the universe."



No. 147.—*An inconvenient Head-dress.* After Hokusai.

CHAPTER XVI.

SCHOOLS OF PAINTING. RECENT EXPONENTS OF THE ARTS.

REQUESTS have come from almost every quarter of the globe for a history of the art of painting in Japan, to be included in any new edition of this work. Wishing to fall in with these suggestions, I endeavoured to compile a succinct account of this large subject. I however found it impossible of satisfactory compression within a volume which has never aimed at being more than a manual and introduction of an inexpensive kind. Another and more serious objection is that my research into this branch has never been sufficiently extended to warrant my adhesion to one or other of the varied views which authorities now hold. For a study of the text-books discloses a remarkable divergence of opinion between their authors, not only as to the relative merits of the Japanese painters *inter se*, but as regards the giants of the outer world. For instance, Professor Fenollosa, who, in the estimation of those who know him, is considered the first authority extant, and who has had the advantage of years of study on the spot, is scathing in his criticisms of Mons. Gonse's opinions. In his "Review of the chapter on Painting in Gonse's 'L'Art Japonais'" (Boston: Osgood & Co., 1885), not only does he hold up to ridicule and attempt to demolish every one of the French savant's *dicta*, but he places Japanese painters upon pinnacles, or degrades them to depths, that few will be disposed to assign to them. Kanaoka resembles Phidias in sculpture, Nobuzané is divine, Tanahisa



No. 148.—*An Eagle.* By Bairon. (*Author's Collection.*)

is superb, and in colour rivals Titian, whilst as for poor Hokusai, he is as "a barber" or "a bar-tender" beside a god, a "saloon lounge" beside a gentleman.

The majority of the foreign critics of the graphic arts of Japan (very few of whom admittedly have had the opportunities afforded to Mr. Fenollosa of seeing the paintings of Japan's greatest men) will no doubt be inclined to side with the opinions of Professor Anderson, conceived and expressed as they are in a calmer and more judicial spirit. Therefore it is to his works, before mentioned, that I would again refer the student, suggesting at the same time that he should carry in his hand the pamphlet of Professor Fenollosa to which I have referred.

It may however be of interest and service to my readers if I mention, by name only, the principal schools into which the graphic arts have been divided, and to carry the foregoing works of reference up to date, by giving certain opinions which have been expressed, and certain facts which have occurred, since their publication.

The schools of any note under one or other of which all painting has been classified in Japan are as follows:—

1. The *Chinese* and *Buddhist*, the oldest and dating from the sixth century—the Chinese relying on feats of calligraphy in simple or quiet tones, and intended for the educated classes—the Buddhist, gorgeous in gold colour and mounting, intended to attract the masses. The Buddhist subjects were almost entirely religious, but the Chinese included history, legend, mythical zoology, landscapes, animals, birds and flowers, but all executed after Chinese models.

2. The *Yamato* and *Tosa*, or National schools, which arose in the eleventh century, were distinguished by a Chinese basis with decorative colouring executed in a finer and less broad manner than the school just mentioned. The subjects, whilst not excluding those of the other schools, were more commonly connected with Japanese history and legends, and court ceremonials.

3. The *Kano*, so called from its founder, Kano Masanobu, was founded in the fifteenth century, and was one of the



No. 149.—*Study of Carp.* By Shotei. (*Author's Collection.*)

results of the revival of Chinese influence. Its products were distinguished either by rapidity of execution and simplicity of material, or by decorative effect, complexity of design, and splendour of colouring (Anderson).

4. The *Ukiyo-yé Rui*, or popular school, founded by Iwasa Matahei (b. 1578). He was originally a disciple of the Tosa school, but was disowned on account of his seeking motives for his pictures in the scenes and figures of everyday life. His genius exercised a great influence over the Art of his country, and he created a type of figure which was copied again and again by his disciples. It is still disputable whether he or Hishi-gawa Moro-nobu (b. 1644, d. 1711) was the real founder of the school—the last named having had a great talent, which, however, he principally exercised in book illustrations (see p. 247). He had three brothers, Moro-fusa, Mori-shigé, and Mori-naga, who assisted in the work which was forwarded by Hana-busa Itcho, a great colourist (b. 1651, d. 1724) but an independent worker. The principal artists of this school were mainly occupied in wood-block engraving and colouring, and a list of their names will be found at page 247.

5. The *Shijo*, or Naturalistic, dating from the middle of the last century, was named from the street in which was the studio of Okio, its founder. According to the Gwajo Yoriaku, Okio invented a new style, painting birds, flowers, grasses, quadrupeds, insects, and fishes, from nature. His talents were also manifested in the delineation of landscape and figure, and he was a skilful colourist; all people learned by his example, and he effected a revolution in the laws of painting in Kyōto. The story of the wild boar which he painted, imagining it to be asleep when it was dead, but so realistically that a critic, examining the picture, declared it must have been, which turned out to be the case, is too well known to require lengthy telling here. It has been illustrated over and over again in Art. Washes and quiet tones and outlines are used by the painters of this school in preference to sharp edges and contrasts and strong body colours. Amongst its most noted masters were Sosen (of monkey fame, see Illustration



No. 150. — From a Painting by Saseu, in the Dillon Collection, 1786. (From Andersen's "Pictorial Arts of Japan.")

No. 150), Hôyen (see Illustrations Nos. 151 and 152), Ganku, Ippo, Gantai, Yusei, Yosai, Kuburo, Zeshin.

At the present moment in Japan there exists not only considerable diversity of opinion as to what is the right method of Art for its artists to pursue, but this diversity has split up its patrons, teachers, and followers to an extent quite as great as the academic, realistic, and impressionist schools in Europe. In Japan the two factions style themselves Conservative and Liberal, one favouring the retention of Art in the old grooves and allowing no assimilation of foreign Art, the other advocating not only the use of foreign vehicles, colours, and canvas, but of pencils and brushes, and the practical abandonment of the wonderful system of calligraphy with the brush held at arms-length for which the nation has so long been noted.

So now amongst the old masters the following are most in esteem: Tanyu, Tsunenobu, Kazan, Buncho, Chiuzan, Hoitsu (whose paintings command the highest price), Yosai, and Zeshin, the artist and lacquerer, who died in 1891.

Some three years ago the emperor, desiring to promote the cause of the Fine Arts, took into his service ten artists of note, who had been selected by a specially appointed committee of officials. They were nominated not only for their ability, but as experts on matters of Art.

There names were:—

Mori Kansai	} painters.
Morizumi Kangyo	
Hashimoto Gaho	
Kano Yeitoku	
Tazaki Un	} sculptors
Takamura Kokichi	
Ishikawa Mitsukira	
Kanō Natsuo—worker in metals.	
Shibatā Junzo—lacquerer.	
Date Yasumi—weaver.	

Each was accorded a certain status and a fixed annual allowance, the former of which, it was expected, would be reflected on and assist the rest of the profession, which at present has no social position at all.



No. 151.—*Spring Landscape.* By Hôyen.

Of the foregoing none, except Morizumi Kangyo, appear in a list of the most esteemed contemporary artists given in March last by the *Yomiuri Shimbun*. Morizumi, who was a painter of the old school, died on the 26th of February at Osaka, aged eighty-five.* The names mentioned by that authority are Taki Watei, Kawabata Giyo Kusho, Araki Kampa, and Matsumoto Fuko.

Hashimoto Gaho, another of the official painters, is a professor of the new Art School at Uyeno Park, and his landscapes have even been compared to those of Sesshui and Kano Motonobu for grace and composition. The same school includes amongst its teachers other artists of talent, Kano Tomonobu, and Kawaba Gyokusho, and the sculptor Takenouchi. Kano Hogai, who never received his deserts, died recently, leaving work which will one day be highly appreciated. Amongst recent artists who have shown by their work talents which fit them for a position apart from their fellows are Kiosai; Hashimoto Masakuni (silver medal, Tōkyō, 1882); Utagawa Yasuchika (flower-painter); Bairei (bird-painter). The drawings of Watanabé Shoten and Shinsui have lately been received with considerable favour in England. Amongst a list of the most notable artists in other branches who will exhibit at Chicago, we note the following:—Natsuo (to whom we have already referred); Ito Katsumi, and Kagawa Katsuhiro, silversmiths; Suzuki Chokichi, bronze worker; Kanata Kanejiro, Mujao Yeisuke, Goto Sadayuki, and Takamura Koun, carvers in wood, ivory, and stone; Kagawa Yajiro and Asada Sashichi, enamellists. Miyamoto Kanenori is probably the most expert sword-maker, whilst Uchida Unsui holds high rank as an engraver in metals. Amongst artists in porcelain may be mentioned Makuzu of Ota, Higuchi, Seifu, Takemoto Kanzan, and Tanzan; of carvers, especially of Shinto and Buddhist temple

* Captain Brinkley, in the *Japan Mail*, does not rate Morizumi's work very highly; he considers that he belonged essentially to a school which owed its *raison d'être* to the age of illuminated *Sutras* and pictorial scraps, and that he recalled the methods but not the spirit of the mediæval masters.



No. 152.—*Snow Scene.* By Hōyen.

decorations, Arakawa Junosuke of Matsue, who has also produced netsukés which are highly considered; of bronze workers Tokukuni, Sugaira Takijiro, and a woman Kamé of Nagasaki. Amongst ivory workers, Oba Aitaro. In silver and cloisonné enamel Miyamoto Katsu is termed the prince of living workers.

The following account by Hashimoto Gaho, one of the before-mentioned painters, of his reminiscences of the studio of a master of the Kano School forty years ago, and therefore of the practice which prevailed in old times, cannot, certainly, be out of place here; for not only is it a record of the rapidly changing life of old Japan, but it uncovers many of the puzzling problems which have vexed the minds of foreign students of Japan's Art.

The account is taken from the *Kokkwa*, and was translated into the *Japan Weekly Mail*.

More than forty years have elapsed since Gaho entered his name as a student of this master, and counting over his associates of those days, he finds that most of them are already "men of another world." The recollection of his former art student life evokes in his breast a feeling of deep regret at the demoralisation of spirit among the present followers of his profession. He admits that the system of education followed by the Kano School was far from being all that could be desired; that the slavish practice of copying works of old masters left little, if any, scope for the development of individual genius. Still he believes that the artists of those days possessed a sufficient measure of nobility of mind to elevate them above the sordid concerns of everyday life, and to distinguish them from their successors of the present era. The magnanimous patronage of the feudal government may have helped in some degree to impart a tone of magnanimity and purity to the artist's life. That patronage, however, benefited only a few select families of artists. Men of distinguished merit were, as a rule, forced to live in poverty and obscurity. Among these latter artists purity and elevation of mind were most noticeable.

Four branches of the Kano family were, under different

titles, the hereditary artists of the Tokugawa dynasty. The Kaji-bashi branch lived in front of the castle gate of that name, and was descended from the great master Tan-yu. There were always about twenty students in the studio of this family. Another branch, located at Nakabashi, had the sole authority to confer the name of Kano on artists of merit. The third branch was called Yamabushi-Ido. The fourth lived at first in Take-kawacho, but in the time of Ei-sen removed to Kobikicho, where that master received from the Lord of Tanuma a piece of ground within the compound of the latter's *yashiki*. In the studio of this last branch of the Kano School Mr. Hashimoto completed his art education. The studio had a threefold purpose; to train disciples; to execute the orders of the government; and to offer judgment on objects of Art. Mr. Hashimoto speaks of the studio under its educational aspect only.

The relation between the master and his pupils was as that of a lord and his vassals. The students always addressed their master as *Tonosama* (my lord), and behaved towards him in all respects as feudal retainers to their chief. No person of the merchant class was allowed to receive instruction there. Most of the students were sons of men who had worked in the studio. When an entire stranger applied for admission, an introduction from the chief of his clan was required. The age of students at the time of admission averaged about fourteen. Every student, on admission, had to be received in ceremonial audience by "his lord" the master, on which occasion it was necessary to present the latter with a case of five fans, and the sum of 100 *hiki* (about 80 *sen*) as a substitute for fish. Further, to the master's son—the young lord—the novice had to make a present of a case of three fans and the sum of 100 *hiki*. A present of a similar sum, as a substitute for floss silk, was given to the lady of the house, while another sum of 2 *shu* (about 20 *sen*) was given in lieu of toys for the children. To his new comrades in the school, he had to make a present of 7 *shô* (about three gallons) of *saké* and 300 *hiki* of money as a substitute for fish. In fact, there was not a single person in the house-

hold from the steward down to the meanest servant who did not enjoy a share in the presents. From this inventory it appears that a new comer had to disburse what must have been a considerable sum in Japanese eyes, but, on the other hand, he was not required to pay anything subsequently in the way of fees, except an almost nominal sum for board.

The studio consisted of three rooms, one of which was occupied by the master, who seldom, if at all, entered the two other rooms where his students worked. The room next to that of the master, a species of long corridor, was occupied by students of medium grade. Upon them devolved the duty of attending to the wants of the master. The last room, a large one, formed the principal atelier. Here students of the highest proficiency occupied seats nearest to the window, and those newly admitted were assigned to the darkest part of the room. Every student was allotted two mats, within which space (12 feet by 6) he had to place his desk, a box of colouring materials, and whatever else he needed for his work. At seven in the morning he was expected to be at his desk, and to remain at work till nearly ten in the evening. Conceive the effect which such continued application must have produced on the bodily and mental health of the students. No wonder that so few artists of originality were produced under such a system of education. When the work of the day was over, the student put everything on his desk and slept within his allotted space of mats.

The number of students varied at different times, but generally amounted to about sixty or seventy. There were appointed from one to three *Deshi-gashira* (head students), who enjoyed the privilege of living outside the school and whose office was to maintain order among their fellow-students and to keep a strict watch over the morals of the school. Under the *Deshi-gashira* there were from six to seven *Ehon-kata* (keepers of picture books), who had charge of all the pictures in the stores of the master and who were allowed free access to any of them for purposes of study. The lowest order of student-officer was called *Enogu-kata* (keeper of colouring materials), whose duty it was to dust and clean the drawers in which the



No. 153.—*The Ghost.* From a Picture by Maki Chokusai ; popular School.
(Nineteenth Century.) From Anderson's "Pictorial Arts of Japan."

colouring materials of the master was kept. This office was filled in turn by seven or eight students at a time. Most of the regulations of the school were in the form of unwritten laws, orally transmitted from generation to generation. But certain written rules also existed. These were as follows:— (1) that the students should diligently apply themselves to their study by day and night; (2) that they should adopt the utmost precautions against fire; (3) that, except to discharge business for the master, they should not go out of the house without permission; (4) that strict simplicity should be observed on all festive occasions, as, for example, the admittance of a new student or the “grant of one character” (concerning which we shall speak presently); (5) that except on holidays or to discharge unavoidable business, visits must not be paid to houses in the same compound; (6) that the students should neither feast nor quarrel among themselves; (7) that they should be at their desk by 7 in the morning and not lie down before 10 in the evening; and (8) that before retiring to rest each student should take his water-bowl (the utensil in which the brush was washed) to the “bamboo corridor” outside. The students were strictly forbidden to associate with artists of the *Bunjin-ga* (Chinese) school, nor were they allowed to study paintings of the *Ukiyo-yé* style (*genre* pictures).

The mode of instruction consisted exclusively in copying model pictures by various artists of the Kano School and occasionally by those of other schools. The students, it is true, sometimes had recourse to the study of life in nature, but this was entirely optional, and few displayed any inclination to avail themselves of the permission. The habit of copying from the pictures of other artists seems to have occasionally obliterated the instinct of originality altogether. Thus it is related that certain graduates of the school, having lost their model pictures in a conflagration, were obliged to abandon their profession and seek some other means of livelihood. Of course cases so extreme were exceptional. Even in these more liberal times, Mr. Hashimoto, while pronouncing very strongly against the system of slavish imitation pursued in the

Kano School, admits that it was exceptionally well adapted for imparting power of line and skill in the manipulation of the brush.

The students, being mostly sons of artists, had already learned the rudiments of their art before entering the school. They were first put to copy from model pictures drawn by the celebrated Tsunenobu. These pictures, numbering in all sixty, were bound in five volumes, and several copies of each volume were always kept in the school, so as to be available for use by the students. The process of work was this; the student first made a careful copy of one of the pictures; then from his own copy he took several more copies, and at last having made himself thoroughly acquainted with every detail and every stroke of the picture, he prepared a final copy, which he took to the master, who would pronounce judgment on it, pointing out the merits and defects of the work. Then the student proceeded to the next picture in the book and treated it similarly; then to the next and so on, until he had finished the whole five volumes. This task, carried on from sunrise to sunset every day, generally occupied about a year and a half, after which the student passed to the "twelve pictures" of flowers and birds, also drawn by Tsunenobu, the copying of which occupied him about half a year. Then his study became more promiscuous. He began to copy from the pictures of Motonobu, Eitoku, Ryu-min, and other artists, both Japanese and Chinese, and to practise the use of colours. In two or three years he would have progressed so far as to be able to assist the master in the process of colouring pictures, for it has always been the custom of the Japanese artist to have recourse to the assistance of students for the comparatively mechanical parts of a picture, especially the colouring of drapery, armour, and so forth. In return for this service the student was exempted from payment for his board. Having reached this stage of progress, long established custom required him to make a present of 10 *nomme* in money to his master as a substitute for cakes. About seven or eight years after this, he would receive permission to use for his signature one of the characters composing the name of his master.

This was termed the "grant of one character." For example, the late Kano Hogai, having studied under Masa-nobu, called himself Masa-michi. The "grant of one character" signified that the student had graduated in the whole course of education provided at the school. A little over ten years were usually required to reach this point, and the average age of the graduates was about thirty. The "grant of one character" was celebrated by presents as on admission.

A student, sufficiently fortunate and persevering to obtain the long-desired "grant of one character," went home and opened a studio of his own, for he was then considered fully qualified to set up as an artist of the Kano School. He would teach his pupils by means of the copies which he had made while at his master's school. One can easily understand with what a multitude of copies the country must have been flooded by this system. Many a collector is utterly perplexed to conceive how any artist, however indefatigable and facile, could have painted the thousands upon thousands of pictures confidently ascribed to such renowned masters as Tsunenobu, Tanyu, and so forth; pictures which, though their merits are not sufficient, perhaps, to dispel all doubt of their genuineness, have still so much to recommend them that even the expert is misled. How many of them are nothing more than those "final copies" which the student—his faculty of imitation stimulated to the highest degree of exercise not only by perpetual practice but also by the consciousness that his career depended on the fidelity of his reproductions—made after repeated efforts and patient poring over a model in the "Five Books"?

The hereditary pension of the Kano master, under whom Mr. Hashimoto studied, was 200 *koku* of rice, but he spent all his income on his school. He waited on the Shogun on all days, having 2, 7, 3, or 8 in their numerals, as the 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 8th, 12th, 13th, 17th, 18th, 20th, 23rd, 27th, 28th, and 30th of each month. On days having 2 or 7 in their numerals, his business was to give the finishing touches to illustrations of the "Sanden Shi" (a Chinese History), which had been originally drawn by his predecessor Eisen. On days having 3 or

8 in their numerals, he received orders from the Shogun for pictures to be given as presents to *Daimyo*. These pictures he generally executed in his own studio, or, to speak more correctly, he caused his disciples to draw them for him. He also received orders from many *Daimyo*, and his apartment was always full of silk sent by the latter to serve as canvas. As is the custom with most Japanese artists, he does not seem to have been very punctual about the execution of orders from these *Daimyo*, for it is stated by Mr. Hashimoto that a quantity of the silk sent by them was left to be eaten by moths.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE STUDY OF JAPANESE ART.—CONTENTS OF OUR MUSEUMS.—THE FUTURE OF JAPANESE ART.



WE have now arrived at the close of our survey of Japan and its Art, but it may not be out of place to add in conclusion a few words upon the subjects which head this chapter.

Those who have read this book will hardly need to be told that Japanese Art requires to be studied. It is, however, necessary to emphasize this, for the interest and beauty contained in it do not always lie upon the surface. Every piece gains in interest by its connection with its fellow, whether its

subject, its material, or the treatment of one or both be studied. If it is possible, the study should be commenced under the tutelage of an intelligent collector, for an hour with such a one will change a languid liking into an ardent appreciation.*

* I especially advise this in the case of those who intend to acquire as well as to study.

Unfortunately the means of learning do not exist here as they do in Germany, by means of an Oriental College (see *post*, p. 276), and so the majority must turn to our British and South Kensington Museums to satisfy their needs.

The following brief survey shows the extent to which these institutions do so.

Lacquer.—This manufacture, which is more essentially Japanese than any other, though perhaps not the most suitable to a museum collection from the Industrial Art point of view, is hardly represented at all in either Museum. The pieces at South Kensington are almost without exception modern, and there is, I believe, only a single inro; there are some specimens of the various kinds of lacquer, similar to but not so instructive as those at Kew (see p. 157). The British Museum has only a few isolated pieces of lacquer.*

Metal-work.—There is a collection of the least interesting phases of this at South Kensington, but with the exception of the Miochin eagle and one or two other large pieces, it is almost entirely confined to metal okimono, the majority of them uninteresting and ugly types. Many of the so-called Japanese bronzes are Chinese, and many of them are wrongly labelled. As regards swords and sword furniture the Museum is miserably furnished; no fine swords, very few guards worthy of the collection, a few second-rate kodzukas, no fuchi-kashiras or any of smaller pieces; no specimens of mokumé; in fact no fitting representation of any section of the metal-work which should be of such interest and profit to our metal-workers. At the British Museum there are a few good swords. There is also a small collection of bronzes, and samples of patinas at the Geological Museum in Jermyn Street.

Ceramics.—Both Museums have a practically complete collection, South Kensington having effected a most judicious purchase of the collection exhibited by the Japanese Govern-

* It is understood that lacquer is not bought by the authorities because it is not capable of adaptation to our own industries. If this is the rule which guides purchases, it would be interesting to know why the cast of Trajan's column was acquired, and a thousand other things.

ment at the Philadelphia Exhibition, and one, of perhaps greater value, having been presented to the British Museum by Mr. Franks.

Paintings and Engravings.—The British Museum has, by the acquisition of the Anderson collection, made it unnecessary for any addition to this department. Numbering as it does some thousands there should be material for ample distribution to provincial museums if required. South Kensington possesses a quantity of engravings.

Sculpture in Wood and Ivory.—At the British Museum there is a collection of shrines and idols, but neither Museum, so far as I know, possesses a single netsuké. Modern ivory-work, which can be reproduced at will, is represented by some garish screens at South Kensington, and much of the carved tusk work which is to be found in every shop.

The only means at hand for students in the provinces are their local museums, and the contributions to temporary museums lent from time to time by the Science and Art Department. As regards the former so far as I am aware, the majority have little, if any, material of value for the purposes of study, or as an aid to manufacture. The only important collection with which I am acquainted is at Birmingham, where by the liberality of some private collectors a large amount of material has been amassed. Much of this unfortunately is only second-rate; there are many duplicates, and there is little representative work in the branches, which at such a centre of the metal-work industries should be most complete. Oldham has, through private munificence, made a beginning, and Manchester is wisely collecting examples of textiles. As regards the Japanese contributions sent down to local museums by the Science and Art Department, of what worth can they be when they are merely selections or duplicates of what there is at the Museum?

The acquisition of identical objects by the two great Museums must before long engage the attention of the nation. With complaints in each Department as to money for the purchase of Art objects becoming scarcer and more grudgingly given at each successive vote, it is evident that some method must soon

be adopted whereby a duplication in the purchase of objects shall be avoided.

There is a consultative committee at South Kensington upon which is one Japanese collector.

Two other matters remain to be noted ; first, the visible and future supply of fine Art objects, and next, the future of Japanese Art.



No. 154. *Tea Jar (Cha-ire). Mishima. (From Mr. C. Holme's Collection.)*

At present one of our museums assumes a preference for modern over old work, and acts upon this preference in its acquisitions. Are the authorities—if they ever intend to complete their collections by the purchase of old specimens—wise

in postponing indefinitely the time for so doing in the face of the following facts?

(a.) The Japanese Government is cataloguing all Art treasures in temples and other public buildings to prevent their being sold, thus stopping an outlet which has long been the principal drain through which curios have left the country.

(b.) The Japanese press is chiding the well-to-do of the country for their apathy and failure to recognise the value of their old Art wares. It points out that at exhibitions the only fine things are shown by foreign collectors, and it urges upon the Government the wisdom of providing museums, purchasing all good specimens for them, and preventing their exportation.

The *Japan Weekly Mail*, in pleading for the retention by Japan of Japan's treasures, says that it is "a well-authenticated fact that a traveller coming to Japan now cannot hope to see any such collections of Art treasures as may be witnessed at all times in the private collections of Paris, London, and New York.

(c.) The general consensus of opinion that the markets are getting denuded; importers, one and all, agree as to this; search has now to be made further afield in Japan; the noblemen's treasures which poured forth in such profusion when they were deprived of their revenues have long ago been distributed, and the Japanese, finding every tourist who comes to his country ransacking it for curios, and receiving regular visits from dealer after dealer, is acute enough to see the wisdom of either retaining his good things or asking an increased price for them.

(d.) Many of the finest manufactures have ceased to exist with the altered state of society. Silk and satin robes are not required now, when the court and everybody who would be in the fashion has adopted European costume. In their train netsukés, inros, swords, pipe-cases, etc., have also been swept away. So too, most of the household appliances made of lacquer, and kakemonos and makemonos have given way to European furniture and gaudy chromo-lithography.

At present there is only one Art museum in Japan, namely at Ueno. Two noblemen only are collectors.* But once the Japanese sees that it is the correct thing to do, both the nation and individuals must enter the market for fine things, and raise the price of them.



No. 155. *Blue and White Dish. Mikawaji Ware. (From the South Kensington Museum Collection.)*

* This statement, taken from the "Mainichi Shimbun," and endorsed by the *Japan Mail*, does not accord with the following by Professor Morse: "Nowhere in the world is the taste for collecting more common than in Japan, and the Japanese have their special fields of collecting, as, for example, pottery, tiles, pictures, books, autographs, swords, armour, brocades, etc.—these collections may be numbered by hundreds." ("Old Satsuma," *Harper's Magazine*.) Professor Morse evidently refers to those containing half-a-dozen specimens only which are numerous.

As regards the furniture of Japanese Art, I have written at some length elsewhere.* I there endeavoured to show that the altered state of circumstances and foreign competition have now rendered it almost impossible for good work to be produced. These opinions have received ample endorsement from the native press, which is urgent in calling attention to the matter. It points to the growing disfavour which Japanese Art products are receiving, owing to irregularity and want of care on the part of the workmen, and the merchants glutting the market with inferior goods whenever a demand for any articles arises.

We have seen the way in which the old work was produced by craftsmen, the inheritors of secrets the result of accumulated experience extending over centuries, with ample leisure, working for one master, who treated them with distinction, fed, clothed, and paid them, gave them the finest and best materials to be found in the country, and a permanent income which bore no relation to the quantity but only to the quality of their productions.

Nowadays the foreign market has taken the place of feudal patronage. Its demands are fitful, and the relation between selling price and cost of production has become essentially important. The consequence is that Art-artisans are driven to abandon their old standard and devote themselves to the manufacture of whatever pays best, prostituting the spirit of Art to the promptings of gain. They are also compelled to cater to foreign taste rather than to adhere to Japanese canons. The consequences are before us every day. How can an escape be made from it, and whence can a motive for renaissance proceed?

There is little hope in religion, for the religious instinct now only sways the lower classes. The nation is at present too much occupied with the task of reconstituting government and society upon a Western basis to think seriously of the artistic or the beautiful; and the upper classes spend what spare time and money they have (so the "Mainichi Shim-

* *The Nineteenth Century*, March, 1888.

bun" says) on carnal pleasures. The press hold forth different panaceas for the evil which all admit. But the general consensus appears to be that until Japanese Art-artisans learn the value of organisation it is virtually impossible to utilise their abilities profitably. At present they cannot be depended upon to work regularly or well, they make no attempt to keep engagements, and persistently decline to regard their work as a serious matter of trade. If these failings can be corrected there will be a great future before them.

The last point of all to which I would call attention extends beyond the limits of Art and affects the British nation at large. Statistics go to show that in Japan, as elsewhere, the Germans are doing their utmost to supplant the English. Whilst our exports are decreasing theirs are augmenting by leaps and bounds. I have already shown (page 192) how their museums are working in an energetic way to assist them, and this is by no means all. Every one knows that nowadays success in business with foreign countries is only achieved when the traveller goes with a knowledge of the language, manners, and customs of the country. This is how they are promoting knowledge in Germany. A new Oriental College has been opened at Berlin, whereat a large number of students have matriculated, and the lectures are well and regularly attended; there is a Japanese amongst the various professors who does not confine himself to abstruse questions of dialect, but devotes himself to the tuition of what will enable the student to go out to Japan and be "understood of the common man." In addition to this, lectures on subjects of general interest, such as "The mode of dealing with Orientals," "Japanese poetry and Art industry," "Domestic and family life," are delivered on Saturday evenings and are open to the general public.

How does this contrast with what we are doing in England? It is only within the last few months that a Japan Society has been started in London. That it was needed was immediately apparent, for it at once secured the adhesion of all

those most interested in the Art and commerce of that country. Concurrently with this a knowledge and appreciation of the Art is slowly spreading. What is now most wanted is some place, such as the Japan Society could supply, where information respecting the country can be obtained, and still more urgently a fitting and judicious representation of it in our national museums.

INDEX.

The pronunciation of Japanese letters is shortly as follows: *a* as in father; *e* as in prey; *i* as in machine; *o* as in no; where a horizontal line is over *o* or *u* the sound is prolonged; *u* as in rule; *f* as fu softly; *n* at the end of a word as ng, in the middle when followed by syllable beginning with *b*, *m*, or *p*, as *m*; no pure Japanese word begins with *p*; double *pp* shows lack of cultivation, as Nippon instead of Nipon; *r* in *ri* sounds *dr*; *s* is always sibilant as in *sip*; *t* in combination *d*; *sai* is like *sigh*, *sei* as *sayee*. *Nigori* is the impure or soft sound of a consonant, expressed in Japanese by two dots or a circle; *chi* or *shi* becomes *ji*; *ho*, *bo*; *tsu*, *dzu*; *su*, *zu*; *ku*, *gu*, &c. The Japanese lettering on the back of the cover is a poetical title by Mr. Kataoka, Yamato-no-nishiki, *i.e.* "a rich weaving of Yamato's glories," and the author's name. From want of space the names of the principal artists only are mentioned in the index.

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